

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

The New/Old

NA Way



VOLUME 33

June - July 2020



The New/Old NA WAF Magazine

Volume 33

June - July 2020

This magazine was written in open participation by members of the Groups of The Anonymi Foundation and members of the Groups who participate in the Fellowship Service Conference and the European Fellowship Service Conference

**GET
INVOLVED!**

We need your input!

Please send your articles, event information, comics or other input to nahelp.org@gmail.com

Upcoming Events

15TH ANNUAL FELLOWSHIP SERVICE CONFERENCE FOR N.A.

Date: June 26th thru June 28th, 2020
Hamburg, PA

1ST ANNUAL NORTH EASTERN COAST TRADITIONALIST GATHERING

Date: July 11th, 2020
Pennsville, NJ

5TH ANNUAL EUROPEAN FELLOWSHIP SERVICE CONFERENCE FOR N.A.

Date: September 17th thru September 20th, 2020
Ambt Delden, The Netherlands

ANNUAL 12 STEP RETREAT

Date: February 19th thru February 21, 2021
Columbiana, Ohio

Your event here? Send information to nahelp.org@gmail.com

Weblinks

www.nahelp.org

Contact:
nahelp.org@gmail.com
USA

www.freerecovery.org.uk

United Kingdom

www.nahelp.se

Contact:
antigenfriana@gmail.com
Sweden

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Contact:
nahelp.nl@gmail.com
The Netherlands

The New/Old NA Way

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The Groups of Northern Columbiana County Area of
Narcotics Anonymous present...

Annual 12 Step Retreat

February 19, 20, and 21, 2021

Das Dutch Village Inn
150 East state Route 14
Columbiana, Ohio 44408

What to expect: Speakers, Discussion, Coffee,
[Real NA Old School Recovery!](#)

only \$5.00 for the weekend if you pre-register -
\$10.00 at the door

Pre-Register by Emailing stepretreat@yahoo.com

NO addict EVER turned away!

Rooms start at \$94 per night for 2 adults
(\$10.00 additional for each adult)

Prices are subject to change
Reserve your room by January 1, 2020 mention you are
with the

NA retreat to get the discounted price

Call Hotel @ 330-4825050

My Gratitude Speaks
When I Care
And When I Share
With Others
The NA Way

“Tradition Six”

“An N.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the N.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.”

“Let’s take a closer look at what this Tradition really says. First thing a group ought never to endorse. To endorse is to sanction, approve, or recommend. Endorsements can either be direct or implied. We see direct endorsements every day in T.V. commercials. Direct endorsements can also be in writing and often appear in proposals and promotional sales material. A direct endorsement is often used to try and persuade someone to do something. An implied endorsement is one that is not stated. Although we don’t usually recognize it as such, implied endorsements occur in our stories. We say, ‘The big kids used it and if they used it, it had to be good.’ The next thing we ought never do is finance. This is more obvious; to finance means to supply funds or help support financially. The third thing warned against is lending the N.A. name. This means letting use the name, Narcotics Anonymous for something that is not Narcotics Anonymous. It also means letting an outsider mention or utilize our name for their own purposes.

Several times other programs had tried to use Narcotics Anonymous as a part of their ‘services offered’ to help justify a finding proposal. Had we allowed this; we would have been letting them use our name. These are the ‘ought Nevers’ in the Sixth Tradition.”

Grey Book page 104 lines 8-30

One of the biggest violations of the Sixth Tradition we see today is verification attendance papers.

In 1989, the first drug court was built, in Miami - Dade County; as a response to the growing crack cocaine problem plaguing the city. All 50 US states now have drug courts, with a total of more than 2,400 courts. Although that information is an outside issue, it is useful when we look at the internal issues. As I studied dozens of manuals of operations of drug courts, Narcotics Anonymous seems to one of the biggest parts of their supervision model. Their agencies or courts will use verification attendance papers to supervise their caseload. Many of those people who are sentenced to these programs through the states may not be potential members of Narcotics Anonymous, because they are not addicts. Some of them never used a drug in their life.

The courts send people to our meetings to get a paper verified for the judge. Most people now believe we are a part of the

17th - 20th September
2020



Location:

Kroeze Danne, Kappelhofsweg 14
Ambt Delden, the Netherlands

Price: € 125,- (All-Inclusive)
Possible to pay in terms

Register at www.nahelp.nl
or email to nahelp.nl@gmail.com

Contact: 0031642091629

court system. When we verify an attendance paper, we endorse the court system, and lend them our name and program to utilize it for their own services. If our Traditions should never contradict each other then, how does this complement our Fifth Tradition if a group verifies attendance papers? It doesn't.

Today we have seen a wide range of issues when we allow these things to take place in our Groups; from people selling signatures at a meeting to people getting locked up for not attending the whole meeting or missing a meeting or two. We have become a reason someone may never hear the message when they're willing to come.

To allow this would be going against the great good Narcotics Anonymous has to offer.

"N.A. is a non-profit 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."

So, if someone takes a plea deal just to stay out of jail, and they're not an addict wouldn't they be affecting our atmosphere of recovery?

"We are not affiliated with any other organizations, we have no initiation fees or dues, no pledges to sign, no promises to make to anyone. We are not connected with any Political, religious or

law enforcement groups, and are under no surveillance at any time."

Now there seems to be some type of connection here when a law enforcement group sends addicts to our rooms with a mandatory paper to be signed.

When I first found Narcotics Anonymous, I was under the impression that we were connected with the court systems. Little did I know, we should not have been allowing this. Today many of us find it hard to find an atmosphere of recovery. We have resorted to starting closed meetings and not verifying attendance documents just to maintain our atmosphere of recovery.

"When we as a group waver from our primary purpose, addicts die who might have found recovery."

The key word is "Found." We can allow them to find us, if we are willing to do the work. Public Information can work great if we are willing to do the work. Let the addicts find us, we should never go seek them out and force them into Narcotics Anonymous.

Written By:

Anonymous Addict S.N.J.



1st Annual North Eastern Coast TRADITION PALIST Gathering July 11, 2020

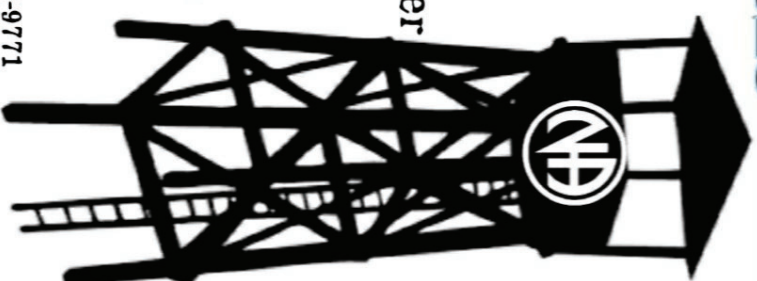
454 Fort Mott Road,
Pennsville NJ 08070
Fort Mott State Park

{Pavilion 2}

9:00am - 7:00pm

Potluck Lunch & Dinner
Grey Book Reflection
Meeting, Speakers,
Fellowship, & BBQ

Hosted by
The Historical Perspective Group
The Most Perfect Vehicle Group
The Rabbit Meeting
A Different Look Group
Spiritual Solution Group
Matt F (856) 803-8857 Bill C (610) 809-9771



First Grey Book Meeting & Result

Hey everyone, just wanted to let you know how the Grey Book meeting and discussion went last Wednesday night. I wasn't sure how it would go, or who would show up, but what came out of it blew me away.

We decided to start it off with reading the first page, so those who didn't know what the Grey Book was could get an understanding of it. Then we went to Who is an Addict. We decided to do a format where we read a paragraph, then open it up for comments, no limits on how many times one can share or anything, it was really relaxed.

The meeting was amazing. We had 9 total addicts that attended. In reading the Grey Book with others and discussing it, you could really feel the spirituality coming out of that book that was written by addicts for addicts. That term came up a lot in the meeting. It was quite the experience to see others relate to what is in the Grey Book.

One addict with 4 days clean from out of town showed up. He had time in the program previously and knew the Basic Text pretty well. He would also go to other fellowships and had a realization with some lines in the Grey Book that talked about not focusing on our differences, but rather our sameness. How we are all in

the same "dimension" of addiction. He wanted a Grey Book badly and looked disappointed because he didn't have any money... little did he know that loving addicts came together to make this literature available for next to nothing, so he left with a Grey Book, some hope, and some gratitude. He's been to an NA meeting every night since and has been reading the Grey Book he got too.

One addict that is curious about the traditionalist movement, brought their 6th edition to compare. What he (and myself) found was, there is no comparison. The Grey Book is on its own level, something else completely. Towards the end of the meeting referred to his 6th as "distilled down" and that the Grey Book was more raw, you could tell it written by US. He got a Grey Book at group cost, and thought the price for it was insane, in a good way.

The reading and discussions went for about 2.5 hours, then some of us stayed and talked history about the editions, the traditionalist movement, and I gave some info about Radio Free NA and other archives so people can check the facts themselves.

On a personal level, I was amazed some of the things I read and that stuck out in our discussions. I've read Who is an Addict in the Grey Book but reading with a group of recovering addicts and talking about it made so much

15th Annual Fellowship Service Conference for N.A.

When: June 26th thru June 28th, 2020 Where:
Hamburg, PA Place: Olivet Mountain Camp 1540
Mountain Ave. Hamburg, Pa 19526

Cost: \$100.00 per person

Price includes 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 More Information: Contact Historical Perspective Group
(610) 428-9923 Ask for Ray: or e-mail — matrixmateclub@yahoo.com
Check Out Our Web www.nahelp.org/ Send check to: A.S.I.S. For NA
**P.O. Box 4404 Allentown, Pa 18105 Write checks payable to
Historical Perspective Group of NA** (Bring sheets, pillows, Towels and soap
everything else provided)

Name: _____ E - Mail: _____

Address: _____ City _____ State: _____

Zip: _____ Phone Number (____) _____

Group Name _____ **Register by June 1, 2020**

Amount \$100.00 Check NO. _____

(Adversity does not build character, it Reveals it.) More Will Be Revealed.....



more stick out. One of my favorite lines that somehow did not make it to the BT, "Drugs could no longer hide the pain." In the 2.5 hours, we got thru 5 pages, we were there 3 hours total.

Most of you hit the head on the nail in saying that we would want it to be every week, instead of once a month. Everyone there agreed they would love to have it every week, so we are going to meet at the same place at the same time and do it. Beautiful stuff happening.

Thank you all for your suggestions on this meeting.

With gratitude,

**An Anonymous Addict from
Western Ohio**

It's CLEAR to Me

Sociology, anthropology and other sciences have done many studies about the importance of language and its role in socialization, identification and culturalization of people. One of the most prominent ways identity is reinforced, supported and conveyed is through the spoken word. This is true of any social group, NA or otherwise. Here are a few excerpts from one study on socialization and language. They've found that language has two functions, communication and identity. The communication aspect is apparent. But the underpinning of social unity and identity may not be so apparent. According to many studies, language helps to express, encourage and reinforce a social group's common ties, beliefs and identity. It allows that



POSTPONED

History
of NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

Hosted by The Historical Perspective Group & The Most Perfect Vehicle Group
of Narcotics Anonymous
MONDAY 21, 2020
8:00 PM - 10:00 PM

14 SOUTH MAIN STREET
WOODSTOWN NJ, 08098

Potluck Lunch & Dinner

"We are not giving up.
We are sitting here for the ones
coming after us. We are sitting here
for the addicts not born yet. We must
keep these doors open." Jimmy K

MATT F (856) 803 - 8857
SOUTHJERSEYNARCOTICSANONYMOUS@GMAIL.COM
RAY D (610) 428 - 9923

Report Stockpile Historical Perspective Group

t

Note:

Due to the corona crisis we are not able to give you an accurate update on the stockpile. The meeting facility closed down before we were able to get the information we needed.

Report will be updated next volume. Thank you for understanding.

Report Stockpile: Europe (Hengelo)

Note:

Report will be updated next volume. Thank you for understanding.

common bond to arise as well as give that social group its own distinctive uniqueness from other groups. Language is so important to a culture or social group that it is often one of the first lines of attack when one group of people wish to weaken another group of people. A look at the American Native history reflects this trend as well as other aboriginal histories on other continents. Language is much more than just words, according to history and what the sciences have found. Personally, I have found this to be true in my own social group of Narcotics Anonymous as well.

It is true NA came into being with the cooperation of another fellowship to help us form and get on our feet. I think that we are all grateful for that beginning. At the same time, that mixed beginning later became a hindrance.

NA eventually grew to a stage where knew it was time to come into its own. One way for that to happen was through the development our own way of communicating our unique message and our separateness from outside interests by the language we used. It was time for our implied affiliation to come to an end and to communicate that, in NA, there is no difference between alcohol and drugs and that our freedom is based upon recovery from addiction not from any specific substance. We cut the apron strings and said "Thank you for

all you've done other fellowship, but we are now ready to strike out on our own." It was a milestone moment.

When I hear "clean and sober" so does my inner addict. It perks up like a dog hearing the treat bag open and is ready to go running headlong into that possible loophole. But with the simple message of being "clean" and of having "recovery" that loophole dissipates, and my addiction is silenced. That is powerful!

I support language as an identifier and unifier. I believe language is a marker that triggers our understanding or need to understand more. Language is the map. If you have a faulty map, you will be lucky if you arrive at the destination you set out for. So for me language, especially in NA, is a gift and it is important. It is part of our unity, our strength and our identity. It is part of my personal freedom and very important to my ability to continue to recover. It is how I communicate the full freedom I have experienced because of NA and I believe I have a responsibility and the honor of carrying that clear, lifesaving message, unadulterated with things that could cause misunderstanding and dilution of our singleness of purpose.

I am not saying, nor would I ever say, that language is an excuse for one to be a bully or to act disrespectfully to another.

As God Speaks

That is never right. I DO, however, believe in the guidance I received when I was new that said "This is how we do things and though we love you, we will not mold ourselves to you. You are not running the show." That strength and self-respect inspired my own respect for NA and as a result my freedom. I am not confused about alcohol and I know from personal experience how harmful such confusion can be. Because of that I will continue to lovingly explain why we are "clean" in NA and why we have "recovery" and how wonderful that is, to the newcomer. With freedom comes responsibility and it's an honor and privilege to carry this message as it was carried to me. Its beauty is its simplicity and it calls me to practice integrity and humility when sharing it. Clarity is a gift, not a burden. I have never found it helpful to pretend what I say has no bearing on what is communicated, unless I am trying to find yet another kind of loophole. The kind that justifies me doing what I want and saying what I want regardless of the results. So, I just keep it simple and clear. It's a small way I can say thank you to NA for all it's given me.

Grateful to be a clean and recovering addict.

From the USA

These last week's things are happening in my life that I can't fully explain. Somehow every night I wake up between 3 and 5 AM and at first, I was annoyed by it and tried to go back to sleep. In my personal recovery I have been dealing with stuff internally, old patterns and feelings that have done me a lot of harm before. Something inside me told me step out of the way more and let things be revealed. I felt there was no other way than honestly and sincerely ask for help and I have done more meditating and writing daily. Since then I have had a lot of moments where I felt something was showing me the way. In the moments I feel calm, get goosebumps and sometimes tears in my eyes. It's like something pulls me out of my self-centered thinking and I can see I don't need to pursue these ends anymore. I can let go of control and the idea that I need to manipulate reality as it fits my needs. I still wake up every night between 3 and 5 and I feel something is trying to tell me something. Now I just go out and meditate at these moments and write about stuff that comes up. At first, I didn't feel like sharing this stuff because I still thought there was a change, I was making this up or being delusional. Now I KNOW something is guiding me and every time I step out of the way God shows

addicts didn't stay clean. Partial abstinence instead of Total Abstinence was encouraged. Standing for principles was frowned upon. Today I understand I may have stayed clean during that time, but the amount of recovery I experienced was very little. I owe amends to the Fellowship of NA as I participated in some of it even when it felt wrong. It was very discouraging to grow even just a little and start to understand what was happening.

Thank God, I found addicts that believe in honoring our Traditions exactly as they are. It has been a transition and learning to be encouraging rather than discouraging is part of that transition. Being honest and not hiding from reality, while still being encouraging to other addicts when we see the bs is much more difficult than when I was ignoring what is going on and staying so self-centered that I literally didn't care how I was affecting others.

NA is teaching me to find the gifts each of us have. It is helping me seek those and to support each other as we learn together. Knowledge is not an excuse to not live by spiritual principles. Practicing principles before personalities means so much more to me today. It is how we learn to actually help bring others into the fold rather than pushing them away and making cliques. There really are no big shots or little yours when we are practic-

ing Anonymity. We learn how to support one another and how to not support that which we don't agree with. We learn we can disagree without being disagreeable. We grow closer together letting each member grow in understanding. WE care. When we practice these things, we see the beauty of our Traditions. We understand that what affects NA as a whole isn't uniformity. We support EACH Group that seeks to learn how to honor our Tradition more. When we do this and help EACH Group learn that the Group is the most powerful vehicle for carrying our message we grow. We come to not fear what can happen when we trust the Traditions and the freedom that they give the Groups. We are encouraged as we start to take responsibility for carrying our message and for EACH Group having a conscience. It is so powerful being a part of a Group of addicts seeking recovery that care enough to take the time to form a conscience. Thank you to those that kept the dream alive so those of us that came later could truly understand the real power NA has.

Written by An Anonymous Addict From: Nebraska USA

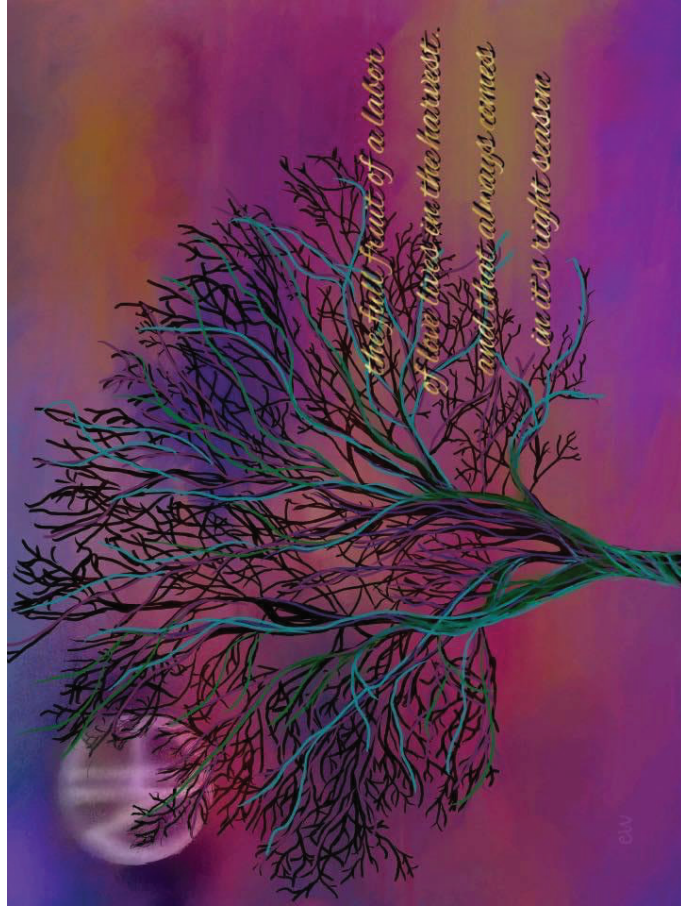
supporting the Home Groups that I participated in. What is sad is even with that being the case no one helped explain a true Group Conscience and the power that it has. So I never experienced having a Conscience as a Group and leaving our egos at the door. Instead we voted on things if we did anything at all. Whenever something like the guiding principles book was brought up to vote on no one wanted to take the time to Conscience anything. It is true what our Basic Text says about

apathy and procrastination are two of our most inherent enemies. The addicts wanted nothing to do with accepting responsibility for carrying our message. Instead it was who could have the biggest parties, or who had the best home group. Competition ran rampant between Groups. Men's and Women's meetings were encouraged and building egos was encouraged rather than encouraging addicts to humble themselves or be humbled. Relapse happened over and over again as

up. Without a daily Program these things would have never happened, and I wouldn't have the tools to work through these situations or even admit something Greater than myself was working in my life. I talked with some members and someone asked to share this stuff here so here it is. I will just continue my daily Program and surrender and see if some other maybe have experience with these things.

Written By:

An Anonymous Member From the Netherlands



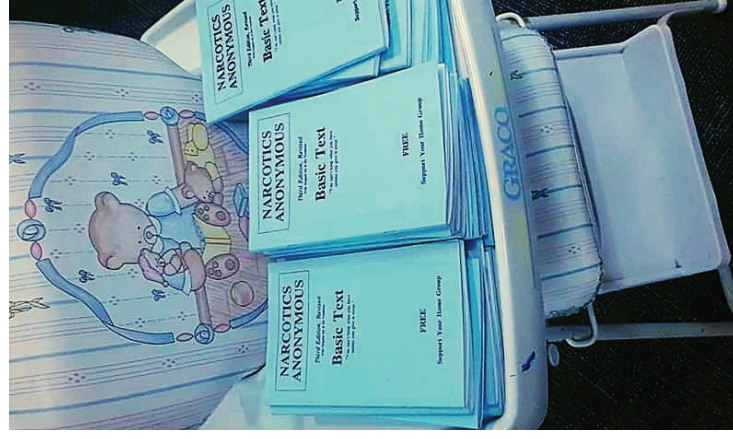
SELF CENTERED, SELF OBSESSED, EGOMANIACS

By studying all of OUR NA literature from the Gray Book to the 3rd edition revised (our HG doesn't consider literature written by professionals or edited by them as ours) I've noticed a theme. Many of the references about self-centeredness, self-obsessed, egotistical addicts was either removed or the message diluted so that it wasn't as clear how our self will run riot is at the core of our disease.

Fear and how we react to these fears with our selfish motives was removed often also. Self-centered fears ran our lives and still will if we let them. We tend to react to these fears if we are not vigilant enough to see them, or if we don't have others that care enough to point out when we are reacting to these fears.

Many of us rebel at that kind of help as it is much different from the help we expect. We as addicts are so self-centered that many of us believe the assisting enablers are helping us. We think that those who care enough to tell the truth are doing so for some personal ego trip. While this sometimes may be true many times that is just a ridiculous idea. What personal gain is there in risking others not liking us?

If we are to continue to recover,

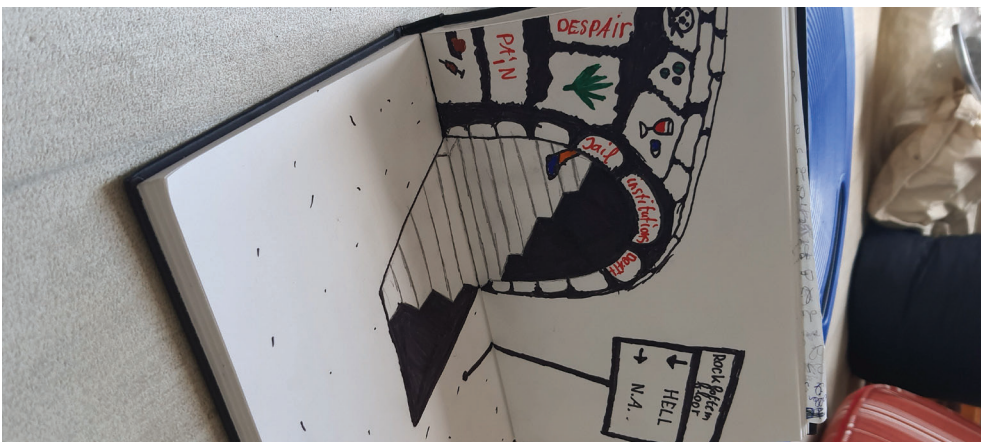


we must Surrender our ego. This starts with total abstinence and an understanding that all drugs are dangerous for us. Without that Surrender we are doomed to repeat the insanity of our disease wants us trapped in. We will continue to fight the NA way rather than Surrendering to it. We can't keep blaming others and getting on our pity pot. If we begin to understand if we are not the problem, there is no solution there is hope.

Personal responsibility is where we start. We start accepting we need to change our lives as no one else can do it for us. Unfortunately, our disease wants to keep addicts from experiencing a deeper level of freedom. So many addicts stop with only limited freedom (if there is such a thing) only to return to our insanity at a later date. The vicious cycle spins round and round and who will lose? No one wins when they are on the vicious cycle.

Getting out of self and understanding Anonymity and our responsibilities as servants helps those of us that choose to continue down the road less traveled. We learn about selfless service and the responsibility of our Home Groups to carry OUR message of recovery. We understand commitment more and being available for the addicts yet to come. If we are not available who will be? We quit living for self, and this sets us free.

Who would have thought being a servant is the way to freedom? I know I didn't think this when I came into NA a SELF CENTERED, SELF OBSESSED, EGOMANIAC. **Written By. An Anonymous Addict From Nebraska**



The pace of recovery

Lately I often get the feeling during the shares in meetings that the "old-timers" feel like the newcomers are growing faster. Usually I get a weird feeling about that. Aren't the "old-timers" happy with our progress? Those were my first thoughts.

In the meantime I found out that it differs from person to person and that the nature/strength of addiction certainly counts. Before my life had become unmanageable, I had known love and happiness. I was really positive in life. That was as good as gone. Everything was flattened by the drugs, but I still recognized the feeling. After I became clean, I felt it all over again, only now more than ever I was so grateful to be able to experience this again. I felt so much that change in me. Like a real addict would react... I wanted more. More of that fine feeling. Because I was so afraid of a relapse, I kept faithfully grabbing as many meetings as I could. In this way I picked up my information and my basis for my recovery was built. That felt good. So good that I even slowly started praying and thanking. I went in with an open mind, had a willingness. At which moment it all started to go by itself I don't know anymore. I do know that the desire to use has disappeared. That I am busy changing my bad "I," where I can, and now I can look at myself

and accept myself for what I am. I don't need to hear anymore that I'm doing well. I know it deep inside myself. (Although a compliment is nice to hear in its time ;))

My motto has always been, why change something when it feels right. I feel good in NA and see that I still have a lot to learn and to unlearn. For that I need the help of my fellows. The so-called "oldtimers". There are still so many pitfalls that I will have to avoid in the future and I need all the help I can get. Also from the newcomers I often learn something. In short, we need each other to grow. We all work on our recovery at our own pace, we must never forget that.

From Anonymous Addict from The Netherlands

ENCOURAGEMENT RATHER THAN DISCOURAGEMENT

Getting involved with service was a turn off for me in the structure that was the only one I thought existed for the first 10 years clean that I experienced. The Traditions were used as weapons to turn addicts against addict rather than helping addicts grow in Unity. It led me to at 3 years clean not participating anymore in area, or regional service. Instead I focused on

Kinnon attended meetings of another group called Habit-forming Drugs but was disappointed with them. In the summer of 1953 Jimmy Kinnon and other members of Alcoholics Anonymous began holding their own separate meetings, which they called Narcotics Anonymous. Mr. Kinnon and several others were given permission from Alcoholics Anonymous to adapt the AA Twelve Steps, but Jimmy changed the Step 1 from "Powerless over Alcohol" to "Powerless over Addiction." This was a significant change of focus from the AA program because NA is focused on the recovery from the disease of addiction rather than any particular substance that was used. Mr. Kinnon saw that the substance being a symptom of a deeper core issue, (i.e. the thinking, obsession and compulsions) which the substance is used to gain a temporary relief from. Narcotics Anonymous was officially founded in July 1953 in Sun Valley, California. There was a different organization also called Narcotics Anonymous that was previously founded by a recovering addict named Mr. Danny Carlsen in New York City, but it did not follow the 12 Traditions and was more of a social-services organization rather than a Fellowship. It died out in the mid-1960s and was never connected to the NA Mr. Kinnon started in Sun Valley that remains and flour-

ishes all over the world today. Most of Narcotics Anonymous early literature was written by James Kinnon and is still used worldwide today in over 70,000 NA meetings. He was the main contributor to the Yellow Booklet and Little White booklet that were used throughout the 1960s and 1970s. From 1953 to 1977 Narcotics Anonymous was a safe haven for addicts to meet in their NA meetings, to help each other get and stay clean from all substances, including alcohol, which in truth is a drug. From 1979-1982 hundred; s of Narcotics Anonymous members expanded on this literature and created the Basic Text. Mr. Kinnon also designed the NA logo, The Group Logo, The Service Symbol and wrote the Gratitude Prayer and "Fruit of the Harvest" statement found in the beginning of the NA book "The Basic Text". This book was the first ever known that was written by recovering addicts for recovering addicts. It was first published in 1982. James Kinnon died of lung cancer on July 9, 1985 in California. Prior to his death he said, if he ever had a headstone it would read, "All we did was sow some seeds and work and wrought to make this world, so that we and others could live. In Peace, in Freedom and in Love. He was clean for thirty-five years at the time of his death. ●●●

Control vs Creative Freedom

"For the purpose of this Tradition, "organized" means having management and control."

Addicts are strong willed people. Often, we have great ideals and can go to great lengths to achieve what we want. This is how we often survived while still using and can also be our reaction to fear. Because we don't like the feeling of fear and powerlessness, so we look for ways to control situations.

How many times in history have we not seen people come up with something great only to lose it again to other people. Look at religions or politic groups for example. In time it loses its real purpose and identity because power and control are taking over. A small group starts to make rules or starts pursuing different goals.

"N.A. as such ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve."

What is N.A.?

"Narcotics Anonymous is addicts who have a desire to stop using and have joined together to do so."

This talks about our Home Groups. We come together for the

purpose of staying clean, and fulfill our Primary Purpose: to share that any addicts can get clean, lose the desire to use drugs, and find a new way to live. That's it!

When an addict who is looking for help walks into a meeting, they should find an atmosphere of love, welcomes, and equality. We believe that by abiding to the Twelve Traditions this is possible. Tradition 9 contains a warning, that we can never organize N.A., and that whatever we create to serve us has to be accountable to the Groups. This is all to preserve the atmosphere we just described. There can be no control or management. Why?

What does control take away? Freedom! In our Groups there is a creative freedom guarded by our Traditions. This Freedom allows our members, from the day they walk in to participate, and become a part of something Greater. This fuels our recovery and is exciting.

When someone or multiple members try to control the outcome of their efforts there is no room for others. It is great to have ideals for the Group, but we cannot push our own agenda. This takes away others freedom, and chance to participate. All our decisions should be made in Group Consensus. This allows all our members to have an equal voice and feel a part of what is going on. Tradition Two talks about this. We need to protect ourselves from ourselves.

We can ask members to do specific tasks for the Group, create committees for example. They should always be responsible to the Group, and not rule, decide, censor or dictate.

In our Group we are learning this constantly. We are members with ideas and every opinion is valued. But sometimes we need to learn to take the time to listen to all of them. We have had some experiences where this almost went wrong. One of our members tried to re-locate a meeting and it had to happen fast. You could feel the atmosphere change during the Group Conscience meeting, and miscommunication took place. Members where against it and spoke their mind. The solo action was not appreciated by the members and the next day amends had to be made, and more conversations took place.

This was something on the Group level. Just imagine what can happen if committees act in this way and try to force their plans on the Groups. This has happened in the past, and still happens today.

If it's a good idea today, it will be a good idea next month.

Written by 4 Homegroup members from the N.A. Zwolle Group in The Netherlands

TOTAL ABSTINENCE, TOTAL SURRENDER, TOTAL PROGRAM

It seems some addicts have difficulties with absolutes. How many of us came in rebellious and wanting to discredit everything others said? Instead of listening to others we would go against whatever others said. When confronted with the word total or all many of us would try to rationalize and justify why those words didn't apply to us. We would make excuses for us being different. We tried changing the program to fit us rather than us changing to the program.

Total abstinence is the first thing we should hear that makes us deal with an absolute. ALL drugs are dangerous for us. There are no exceptions. ALL drugs remove the ability for us to connect with the spiritual part of NA that is necessary for us to recover. If we use any mood altering, mind changing drugs to deal with life on life's terms we are not believing NA gives us the solutions necessary to help us. We have not Surrendered to the program of NA if we continue to rely on drugs to help us deal with anxiety, depression, fear, etc.

Now for the part that I struggled with until recently. Our text says something like only a complete surrender will help us recover. I fought this for years. I understood drugs had me beat

role. When Kinnon was seven years old he befriended a local alcoholic who he referred to as Mr. Crookshank. He would often find him drunk and beaten. One day Kinnon found him badly beaten up and unresponsive. Kinnon ran for help. Over the following weeks Kinnon did not see Crookshank and after numerous inquiries his mother took him to see his friend. They went to an institution that Crookshank was now a resident of. He was wheelchair-bound and incoherent. Upon leaving the facility Kinnon told his mother that when he grew up he was going to help people like Mr. Crookshank. Kinnon was born in Paisley, Scotland on April 5, 1911. He and his parents moved to the United States in the 1920s. For medical reasons he was separated from his parents on Ellis Island for three and a half

days. He befriended a Russian family while he was waiting for his sister to be cleared of a medical issue. When the family was reunited they moved to Philadelphia. He never saw the Russian family again. While in Philadelphia Kinnon went to private school and had plans of entering the priesthood. He began using alcohol and drugs which started getting him in trouble. He never followed through with his goal of becoming a priest. Kinnon stopped using drugs and alcohol on February 2, 1950. He began attending Alcoholics Anonymous, a twelve-step program. While in Alcoholics Anonymous he met other members, who had struggled with addiction to substances other than alcohol. Alcoholics Anonymous often discouraged members from talking about addictions other than alcohol.



happen, and I understand their point of view. Our group takes Group Conscience seriously and I have seen what happens when Groups make decisions emotionally, we start making quick decisions based on emotion rather than on seeking guidance from God through the Conscience of the Group and it's a slippery slope.

As a result of questioning our decision making and Group Conscience this situation worked out better than we could have ever imagined. There ended up being a member of N.A. that was available to interpret for the deaf addict, so she was able to attend, and we were able to keep our meeting closed. I believe that this is a reflection of God's will because this seemed to work out best for everyone that was involved. On top of that, it was a speaker meeting and the interpreter knew our speaker from years before!

As we see "coincidences" and miracles happening in our lives our acceptance becomes trust. We grow to feel comfortable with our Higher Power as a source of strength. Basic Text, Step Two pg. 21

All in all, this was a great experience in Group Conscience. It is too bad that we had to lose two Group members in the process, but I will trust that this was God's will. I am going to close this article with a paragraph in the Gray

Book that kept standing out to me throughout this process.

We want desperately for the place where addicts recover to be a safe place, free from outside influences. We feel safe in our closed meetings. Everyone is an addict. We feel totally free to express ourselves because no law enforcement agencies are involved. No one judges us, stereotypes, or moralizes us. We are not recruited, and it does not cost anything. N.A. does not provide counseling or social services. The rooms are filled with men and women from all walks of life and persuasions. We do have one must in N.A.: NO DRUGS OR PARAPHENALIA BE ON YOUR PERSON AT MEETINGS.

Written By:

Grateful to be Clean!

From: Ohio

Our History

James Patrick Kinnon (5 April 1911 - 9 July 1985), commonly known as Jimmy Kinnon or "Jimmy K.," was the primary founder of Narcotics Anonymous (NA), a worldwide fellowship of recovering addicts. During his lifetime, he was usually referred to as "Jimmy K.," due to NA's principle of personal anonymity on the public level. He never referred to himself as the founder of NA, although the record clearly shows that he played a founding

and that I could never use again. What I didn't see was what the true powerlessness I had over the disease of addiction. The whole way that it affects my whole life. Not just the fact that we can't use successfully, but the fact that the illusion of control is just that. There is so much more to Surrender than just that we will never be able to use successfully. The idea of control of any part is delusional. There are many things we have absolutely no control over. We have no control over how we feel. We have no control over how others feel. We have no control over how others see us. We can fight tooth and nail and no matter what some will never surrender their thinking. Sometimes we need to surrender our thinking also and accept we don't have all the answers. One definition of ego is (a person's sense of self-esteem or self-importance). We must surrender this, or we will continue to not understand

our true place in the universe. We can do great things, but those things normally come from us getting out of the way and letting a loving, caring God guide our actions. When we do things for selfish reasons it don't matter how much we meant to do right. There are always consequences when we don't surrender our ego. Addicts have sensitive ego's and we must let them go if we are to grow. Can we truly surrender and understand that every

aspect of our lives that we have tried to control has failed? Not just controlling drugs but every aspect. Today I see how I am the problem and that is a gift to see because it means I can grow. This total surrender helps us become a part of the WE that will save our lives if we let it.

Just like partial abstinence, and partial surrender only get us so far without a total program we will continue to live for self rather than for WE. We get a total program when we quit living for self in all our affairs. When we can truly say our lives are a living prayer. We learn the Traditions are the ties that bind us together. We understand we can't do this alone and we need the whole program to help us. The program is our Steps and Traditions, but God uses people also and without each of our ESH we suffer. We never know how keeping inside what we have been given in life may help another addict deal with whatever they are going through. We need to grow together so we can help each other live a total program of freedom from active addiction.

Written: By an Anonymous Addict From Nebraska

Membership

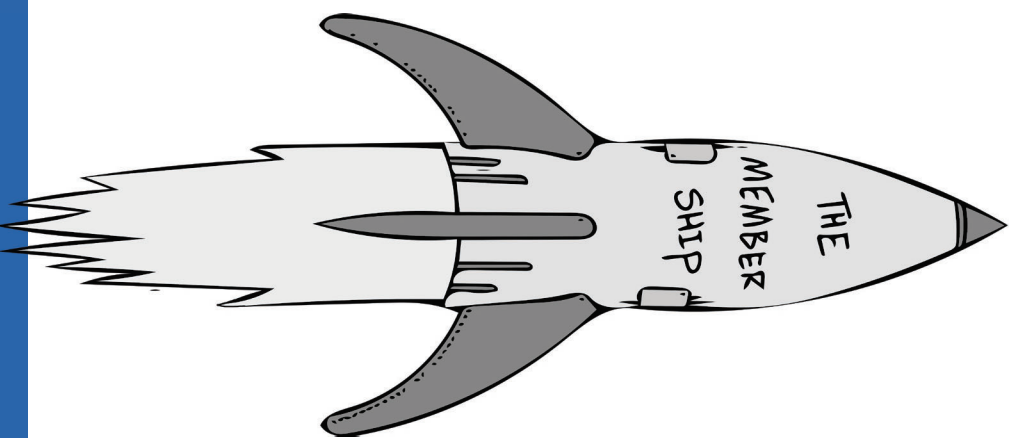
What is Membership in Narcotics Anonymous as defined in NA? It says Membership does not come without responsibility, so what are these responsibilities we talk about?

The first responsibility is staying clean and to carry the message as defined in the 12 steps and through our 2nd Tradition. It takes us being part of a Home Group conscience to carry our message. The Home Group is the most powerful vehicle for a membership to carry our message, to the still suffering addict.

It all starts with the Home Group where we declare our membership and make a decision to get involved in NA services to provide a message of hope and promise of freedom from active addiction. How we do this is joining the Home Group where we take a responsibility to work together to provide an atmosphere of recovery. Membership does come with responsibility to show up, when asked to serve they ask us if we have continuous abstinence from all mood-changing substances and mind-altering chemicals.

There are clean time requirements one would ask when it states in the 3rd Tradition there is only one requirement to join NA, it is the only requirement it says to become a member. True it is however that is to say you

are a member of NA, it does not state to be a member of a Home Group where there are responsibility to run a meeting, to provide an atmosphere of recovery from active addiction. To carry a message to the suffering addict, that no addict need to die tonight without hearing the message there is hope and never have to use again.



standing of our Traditions.

We began this process by dedicating a special meeting for Group Conscience every month and using the format described in the IP. We had very different opinions and views on some of the issues at hand. We were the only closed N.A. meeting in our vicinity and our first big topic was whether or not to sign court verification papers or not. At first only two members were against signing papers while the others had more of an emotional reaction. We did not make any decisions fast. We allowed God to work in our Group and after 3 months we were all in unison in not signing court slips.

A number of months later, when the social distancing orders started to take effect, our Group decided that it would be responsible of us to have our meeting on an online platform. This got us in touch with other like-minded addicts and has broadened our base but has also presented us with some things that we have not encountered before. While meeting in the comfort of our homes it has been an obstacle to keep our meetings closed. I know I for one have a one-year-old daughter that is climbing all over me most of the time. At one of our meetings we met an addict who has a spouse that is deaf and needed an interpreter. She understood that we were a closed meeting and was asking because the inter-

preter was not an addict. We told her that we would talk about this as a group and get back to her as soon as possible.

This stirred up some heavy emotions in a couple of Group members who believed that the answer should be to allow the non-addict interpreter without question. A few other members thought that it would be ideal to find a Narcotics Anonymous member who could interpret for her or to use speak-to-text or closed captioning. I believe that this is a great example of why we have Group Conscience. No one was trying to prevent an addict from coming, we were concerned with how having a non-addict interpreter would affect the atmosphere of recovery and identification in our meeting. Right or wrong, I believe that we should question everything when it comes to how our Groups carry the message and following these Principles in all our affairs.

By nature, we are strong-willed, self-centered people, thrust together in N.A.; mistakes all; not one of us is capable of making consistently good decisions. Basic Text, Tradition Two Page 55.

We ended up having two Group members quit because they said that they could not be part of a Group that would discriminate against an addict with additional needs in this way. It was very sad and unfortunate that this had to

so we have been searching for an answer through God's will. One day we will start another meeting and we will both be able to be involved throughout the week. Many times, we cannot find a babysitter, but that does' not, mean we go beyond the Group's Conscience and bring the children to the meeting. I believe when all is said and done God will show his will for us, and we have the power to carry that out.

Written By: An Anonymous Addict From: USA

Group Conscience Works!

My first experiences with Group Conscience in Narcotics Anonymous were quite painful. The Group that I first called home did Group Conscience the way I believe most Groups do in today's N.A. They used consensus-based decision making where someone would make a motion, it would be voted on, and the majority won. This method seemed to leave some people marginalized and unhappy with the outcome and also allowed for strong personalities to sway the vote. There was one personality in the Group that talked the loudest and would argue her point of view until everyone submitted to her will. This member ran the Group.

In my time in this Group I saw so many members come and go. Some went back to using, some found homes elsewhere, and some were ran out by a personality. Anytime new people that were living the program got involved and wanted to challenge or question the way the Groups meetings were ran, we were told we didn't know what we were talking about and that if we didn't like it to leave. The Group always degenerated into conflict and disunity. I thought I was supposed to stay with my Home Group no matter what happened but after about two years of this me and a few other members decided to start a new Group. We came across an input and review IP called A View on Group Conscience in Narcotics Anonymous and this changed everything for us.

The way that this IP laid out the Group Conscience process made so much more sense to us after going through what we went through with the previous Group. It described Group Conscience as each member's voice being heard, taking our time in making decisions, and making sure that our decisions are in line with the Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous. There would be no emergencies so if it's a good idea today than it would be a good idea tomorrow. We were to strive for God's will to be expressed though our decisions through prayer, meditation and under-

So, there is requirements of membership to be an active member of NA. To participate in a Home Group. We need Group servants to run a Group, open the doors, set up the meeting, set up the literature, chair the meeting, hug the newcomers and need members to break down the meeting and clean up and lock the door. We need a sectary, a treasure, someone to Chair Group Conscience.

As members we take on the responsibility of carry out or message and we do that through various way. The first is to stay clean and participate with others in carrying our message to the suffering addict. We join in are efforts in Public information work, H-I service, answering are phone line and writing of our written message this is all done from are membership. We on responsibility as a GSR Group in communicating with other Groups through service of carrying our message.

Written By: An Anonymous Addict From PA

NA in my Area is dying....

I've been clean for decades. I only say that to let you know I have a solid reference point for how it used to be - which is very different from today. Now when

I go to meetings there are only a few people there or there are 50 people with most being from a local rehab - drinking free coffee and not really giving a shit about recovery.

There is so much fighting in our area. The DRT/MAP people and the addicts who believe they are clean. The old timers who speak the truth about the NA program. The folks with less than a decade clean that only know and believe all the World Service propaganda how NA should be everything to everyone. This side is fighting with that side. The serious about recovery Newcomers who see all that and say forget NA, I'm going to another 12-step program.

I am seeing the death of NA as I knew it right before my eyes. World Services, much like our government here is the USA, has created an US against THEM mentality. Can't use the Grey Book or Baby Blue, gotta allow everyone to your closed meeting and to serve NA. You can't do this and can't do that. Group readings start off with "NA has no musts, but this group has a F**KING 100 rules you MUST follow." WTF happened? Where is the Love? Where is GOD? When did we get so f-in dogmatic and rule-istic? And most importantly, what can I do? How do We fix it? It seems like such an uphill battle.

Is just going to my Home Group and staying there the answer? Using the book and liter-

ature We choose. Sure, we can do that, then others in NA stop calling us, and showing up, and then our Home Group members are on a little island of Recovery. WTF – I'm lost and confused, but mostly just sad. All is the name of money, property, and prestige... we are screwed. Maybe that's why so many people are leaving our meetings.

Written By: An Anonymous Addict From Tennessee

Total Abstinence: A Process

After an emotional back and forth between what I thought I knew and new knowledge that I was not clean on my medication, I made a decision. There was so much fear involved in that decision and the thing I was most afraid of was how I was going to do it. Luckily, the members who told me to come off of the anti-depressant and mood stabilizer I was taking didn't just leave me to figure it out. As it says in our literature "Recovery is a contact process" and I was promised they would walk me through it, and they wouldn't leave me to suffer through the withdraw on my own. They kept their promise and I was able to call and talk about how I was feeling, kept in contact with others who had been through or were currently

going through the same thing I was. In meetings I would share, and I always ended up getting so emotional I would sob, but everyone would just smile at me and I felt safe talking about it.

Once the decision was made, I took what some members considered a bold move, I changed my clean date. I was now a newcomer even though I had thought I was clean for almost two years. Starting over with clean time, at first, was a little depressing but once I accepted that I was finally clean it felt more like a fresh start. I was able to enjoy what some refer to as "newcomer status." In the beginning I would get mad when people would hear my clean time and treat me like a newcomer and I tried to add on that I had been in the program for 3 years, like that meant anything. Slowly, I found that being a newcomer "again" was refreshing, it gave me a chance to learn and be forgiven for acting emotionally inappropriate in certain situations.

The withdraw process off of medications used for mental illness was not fun but it was definitely worth it. I had been on these type of medications for over twenty years and so my experience with the withdraw process may differ from someone who had a short amount of time on them. I knew that my medications if stopped immediately would not cause any physical side effects, such as seizures,

with a Closed meeting that didn't verify attendance papers. I always wondered what may happen if someone came in with a paper, yet to this day I have never seen a paper come into any Group I have been involved with that didn't verify attendance papers and believed in our Traditions and non-affiliation.

At that Group one night a visitor from a few states away came to our meeting. She had her grandson who was not an addict. The boy was around twelve years old or so. We stopped the meeting when they entered the room and the chairperson asked if the young man was an addict. The woman said no. We asked her if she wanted help finding an open meeting, or would she be able to get him a ride home; How can we help?

She called her family and they came and picked him up.

She shared and she mentioned that her daughter never stopped using when she gave birth to her grandchild and she had custody since then. For twelve years her and her grandson went to a NA meeting multiple times a week. Never once had she been to a closed meeting. She talked about things she did while she was clean, prostitution, cheating, stealing, etc. She said to us that she had held on to these things for years because she was only able to share them with her sponsor or another addict but never

felt comfortable enough to share in front of her grandchild in a meeting. She felt freedom that night.

I came to the conclusion that day that NA isn't for everyone, but only for addicts. We need a safe place where we feel comfortable to share with one another; the therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel.

One addict is best with helping another addict and being an addict we're all equal in the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous.

When we decide on if we want to be a closed meeting or an open meeting we sit down with our Group and allow God to guide the Conscience. Do we want the atmosphere to be undiluted with addicts sharing recovery with one another or do we want to open the door to non addicts? Open Meetings can be a good way to share Public Information, but I believe that Closed Meetings is where you can find the atmosphere of recovery.

I'm a parent of three children, my wife and I belong to the same home group and that is a closed meeting.

We do not bring our children to the meeting, we do not invite our non-addict family members, friends, or even a non-addict translator if we were to have a Spanish speaking member attend. At times it becomes hard for us to both attend the meeting,

When I First Found N.A. I Found an Open Meeting

When I first found Narcotics Anonymous every meeting, I found was an Open Meeting.

My first home group was an open meeting. I remember there were a lot of parents in that home group, and all of the children attended. Some children were born during the time I was an active member of that home group.

We used to say, these are the NA Babies. Those kids were at every meeting in the town. We watched them grow as time went on, and it seemed to be the normal thing in NA.

One day I as I was walking home a newcomer approached me and asked me if he could walk with me, as he was heading in the same direction.

He felt comfortable enough to say to me that he was a registered sex offender that was being mandated to attend NA meetings. I accepted him for who he was in the rooms of NA, an addict; just like me. Anonymity makes us equal and he was not less than any of us. It made me uncomfortable though, after knowing this about his past. I would glance over his way to see him staring at the children. I was on guard and would watch where the kids were and hoped that they didn't wander off and he would too.

Later on, in life I moved to another state and became active in NA in that state.

I had a home group that was once again an open meeting and attended another group a few towns over that was an open meeting. In my home group the children were disruptive, and the atmosphere of recovery was hard to find. Especially when two six-year-old kids were fighting all the time. They would even ask questions to people who were sharing. At the meeting a few towns away, I attended one night, and I started to talk about anonymity and how the person who prostituted for a fix and the person who hit three or so doctors for a fix were equal.

In much more detail I said if I wasn't practicing a program I don't know if I'd find myself on all fours.

I have never prostituted but the disease of addiction doesn't make me exempt for making those decisions if I were to be using. Many people thought I was using too much detail; but I thought we're to get honest in the rooms of NA. The parents of a child covered their children's ears, the father said under his breath that I was a homophobic and they walked out of the meeting. People then told me I shouldn't share anymore. It was at that moment I realized NA shouldn't be a daycare.

I found myself moving to another state where I got involved

or death. I honestly would recommend tapering off under the care of a doctor while staying in daily communication with the members who have experience with this process. I, however, just decided to stop taking them. I don't know if that changed the intensity of the withdraw or not, but this is my experience.

I didn't feel overly different the first two days, but after those two days I distinctly remember starting to feel out of control. After about a week off the medications my highs and lows were hitting at the very top and bottom of my emotional scales. For weeks I would be manic and hysterical about two or three hours out of the day before collapsing in a puddle and crying in the middle of the floor. I felt suicidal about twice weekly, there were times when I wanted to be committed. I couldn't handle stress and having two newborns during this time it was more than stress. I would call another member and tell them how horrible I felt and that I wanted to kill myself. They would tell me to hold on and that the feelings were temporary. There were times in that first two months where I couldn't even comprehend a thought because my mind was racing so fast. I was quick to cry and get angry. My partner and I had many arguments that were usually started by me or the fact that I was spending money on frivolous things. The first two

months were definitely the worst I had ever felt. I was feeling things that I never felt before at an intensity level that I had never experienced. The beginning of the withdraw process I couldn't read or write or hardly pray because my mind was going so fast and I couldn't sit still long enough.

Into the third month there was a noted break in the intensity of my feelings. I had a really good day; I wasn't overly upset or anxious. I felt normal. I got excited and I was so proud. It was short lived and the excitement that I felt only made me feel bad about myself when the next day was not a very good day. I did start to notice that the intensity of the emotions slowed down after the third month and coming into the fourth month I had more calm days in a row. My mind began to settle to the point where I could read, and I was able to start and finish small tasks at the same time.

I found that when I was depressed, I didn't want to answer the phone and I also stopped reading and writing, which I had recently started to do consistently. My emotional stability, without the prayer and commitment to my program, started to decline again. I had about a month or two around my sixth month of total abstinence, where I was extremely angry. I was angry at everyone and everything. I was lashing out with

words in person and on social media. As I started to reach out and talk about my anger, I realized I was angry because of the way I was feeling. I hated the ups and downs and now that I was out of the confusion I felt that as hard as I tried there was a pattern every week where I would peak on Tuesdays with a meltdown and the meltdown would slide into a little freak out on Wednesday to depression on Thursdays. I could not figure out why it was those three days that I was having a hard time with. But I was noticing a pattern, and I was starting to notice when I would wind up, and this was progress.

In the eighth month I was praying, reading and writing as consistently as I could. I was praying all day every day and trying to let go of all the things that bothered me. When I started to notice my emotional wind up, I started to be able to stop them. The Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday pattern I was seeing was slowly going away. I was understanding literature, not just reading it. When I was manic, I was able to slow myself down and when I was depressed or angry, I was finally able to pick up a phone and tell the member on the other line how I was feeling.

Things have been so much better for me lately. I have heard from several members it takes a year to two years to fully get out of the withdraw stage. I will tell

you my quality of life is so much better, and I honestly feel better off the medicine than I ever felt on it. This is by no means an easy thing, getting totally abstinent, but once you get through the initial part where you are mixed up and emotional and you start to feel a break, that's when you get the full benefit of this program. I get to learn who I am, not what drugs needed me to be or think or feel. It is such a common misconception when people say, "don't come of that medication, I know someone who committed suicide from doing that." My question for them is, "Did an experienced member guide them through the process? Did anyone check on them?" These members didn't leave me during this process. They were there day and night. Through uncontrollable sobbing and pressured speech, they listened and talked me through. I feel that this has been worth every minute. In the 4 years I have been in Narcotics Anonymous I have written on a step one, two, and three over 2 times. This time, I feel the steps working and I am able to apply them in my life. I will always be grateful to this program and to the members who show me how to live.

**By Anonymous Member
From NJ USA**

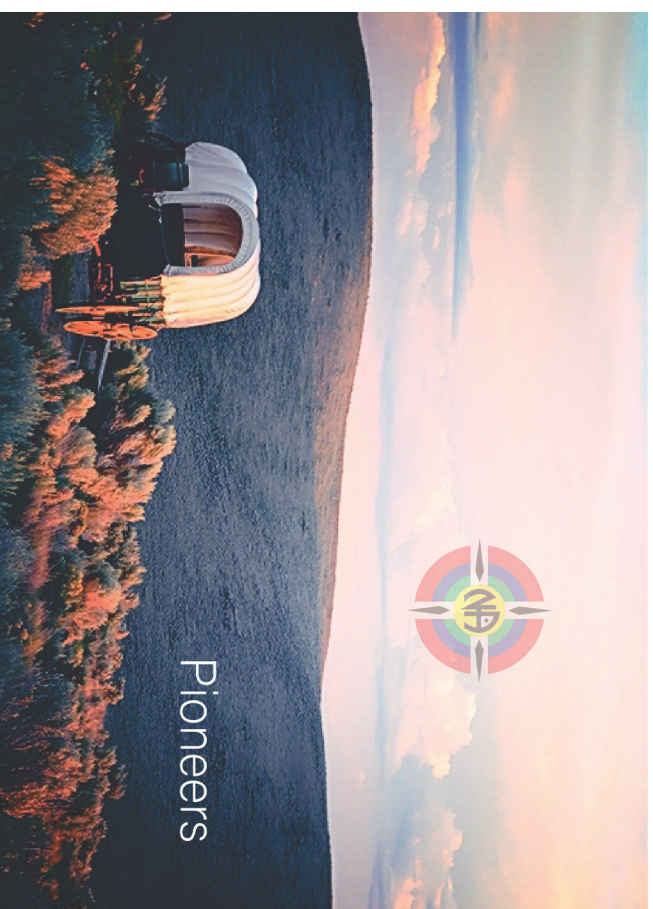
their roots on the sacred ground that was formed for them?

A dictionary definition of a follower is...an adherent or devotee of a particular person, cause or activity. If we have CHOSEN to be a member of N.A. we are all followers of some sort. We have a foundation set for us that can't be changed without forming something different than that foundation. We are choosing to be a part of something greater than ourselves that has changed many addicts' lives. It is a proven path of total abstinence, 12 Steps and 12 Traditions. Got to be honest while I am typing this did not think I would be saying I am a follower, but I am. I choose

to follow the path that was set before me by other members that went before.

No matter what we consider ourselves to be. (maybe we prefer to not have labels, which is actually something I prefer. Look how much of a hypocrite I can be at times.) the one thing is clear if we consider ourselves addicts that have the desire to stop using, we have a place in Narcotics Anonymous. The individual is precious to the Group and the Group is precious to the individual.

**Written By: An Anonymous
Addict From: USA**



Pioneers

time NA was still developing an identity. The Gray Book and the following Basic Text helped blaze that trail to show that addicts can write. It removed the fears and stigma that many had. Trailblazers are often criticized, chastised and mocked for thinking they can offer something that others haven't seen. Trailblazers seem to be able to see beyond what is right in front of them. They know beauty is on the paths left less traveled.

A pioneer is defined in one dictionary as a person who is among the first to explore or settle a new country or area. Throughout history we have seen many pioneers in NA services also. They followed behind the trailblazers and jumped on the wagon one form of speech says. They saw belief and hope was ahead. How many of us have been pioneers in our recovery? Almost all of us have had a Sponsor or someone whose ESH we learn to trust to guide us in our new way of living. Many of the addicts that helped write our Basic Text got involved because a trailblazer told them to be there at the literature conferences. They saw that there was hope in what was happening just as the pioneers of America followed the trailblazers that went before them. Being a pioneer isn't always pretty. The foundation might be unstable. Foundations need formed. Those who are pioneers understand NA

was founded by trailblazers that established a program based on the idea we have a problem called addiction that destroys our lives if we don't follow the trail that was set before them. How many pioneers died thinking they knew a better way when a path was already blazed? Our trail that is blazed has foundations of total abstinence from all drugs, and Group conscience. Some are trying to blaze a trail that takes addicts away from the already formed trail by suggesting ideas of partial abstinence and consensus-based decision making. If it works for them great, but it is not the program of NA. Our Gray Book says, "We are Narcotics Anonymous, and our problem is addiction, other fellowships deal with other problems." Pg. 98 lines 24-25. Later it says "We know of members with a history of drug abuse who have found recovery in other fellowships. We support these members and rejoice in their recovery, and addict who has found freedom and recovery anywhere is a friend of ours." Gray Book Pg. 98-99 lines 32-2. If they find recovery outside of NA that is great, but it is not what we define as recovery in NA. Consensus based decision making is a way to get around taking the time to have a Group conscience. It removes the power of our Traditions that empower the Groups as the top of the inverted pyramid. Where are the pioneers settling

What If?

Any time we look for the service structure to give us answer we are always giving away the authority of the second Tradition and we remove God.

"Those who do not Trust the Groups and Our members and keep looking for solutions in the service structure are doomed to make the same mistakes. over and over again, repeatedly.

What if we just turned everything over to the Home Groups?

What if the Groups were the Trustees'?

What if the NA Members owned Our Literature and intellectual property?

What if the Suffering addicts was the beneficiary of are Literature an intellectual property?

What if we had a foundation like the Anonymi foundation is to hold our literature and intellectual property in trust?

Also was directly accountable to the Home Groups which it serves and could take no action unless directed by the NA Home Groups?

**In Loving Service
Written by an Anonymous
Addict From the USA**



God's Love

It is so funny how our mind starts to clear when where are abstinent for a while. I will (God willing) have 9 months clean on Sunday. I am so grateful for how this journey has gone and continues to flow for me. I listened to other members when they said it would be hard but to stay with it. I did stick with it and the fog as cleared so much. When the fog clears though this makes room for more feelings, thoughts, and memories to push in.

That is what I have been dealing with the past few days, especially the memories. I am remembering little bits and pieces, like flashbacks, of things I haven't thought about for years. Some of these things seem to hold little value but apparently, they held an impact for some reason. They aren't really traumatic or scary memories, just people that I haven't seen or thought about in 10 years, or an event I went to.

I've also been a little teary the last few days, crying for no reason. It is very filling, its kind of nice to sit there and cry for no reason and really not even feel utterly ridiculous. The emotions that are coming through aren't really that strong or that difficult to work through its just new.

When we leave the first step, we have admitted that we are powerless and that addiction had made our lives unmanageable. I

find that upon leaving Step One the fog starts clearing a little faster but like it says in the text we are left with a void. Where do we go from here? How are we to manage all these thoughts, feelings and memories that replace the fog? That is where our Higher Power, who I will refer to as God, comes in.

So, our God needs to be loving, caring and compassionate, which, to me, all three of those words are synonyms. We need our High Power to be that loving, caring and compassionate, not to mention non-judgmental to deal with what we are facing now. We are finally seeing this mess we have made of our lives with a clear head and now we have to journey on into this recovery process. We need God with us, especially in the beginning when we have done a lot of damage and caused hurt in other's lives. We need that one thing in our lives we know that loves us and wants the best for us. God is what keeps us pushing forward because going through all this wreckage and learning who we are is a tough process. Every clean day is a successful one and any seeming failure is just a setback, right? But in early recovery those "setbacks" seem so much more damaging to us because we are so raw. Talking with our higher power and praying for His will and not ours helps us to heal. It doesn't hurt so bad

after a while and we continue to stay clean and work the program and continue to rely on that Higher Power. We find that our Higher Power is doing things for us and we can finally see it!

Our lives start to improve. The more we release the things that weigh on us to God we really have no need to sit in fear, we walk with knowledge that God will handle it. We know that we are loved, and things are moving in the way they should be moving. So long as I follow that way, I have nothing to fear.

In Service

Written by an Anonymous Addict From the USA



Trail Blazers, Pioneers and Followers

History...what a gift. There are some common themes with almost every event that has shaped others' lives in one way or another. Throughout history we have many examples of trailblazers. A dictionary defines a trailblazer as...a person who blazes a trail for others to follow through unsettled country or wilderness. In NA we share our ESH with each other so that those who follow behind us can be blessed with the blessings changing our lives and living by principles can give. Each of us can be a trailblazer at times. How many of us started meetings where no one had a clue what to do? How many took a leap of faith and let go of the fears that stood in the way of recovery and jumped full in to finding out the next thing that would help us stay clean for that day. Every addict that recovers at some point has Surrender to the principles of NA. Some are gifted with great trailblazers that went before them. These trailblazers cleared the path for others to have the beautiful chance to recover. When our Basic Text was being written there were many trailblazers that had no idea how to write a book. One blazed a trail by calling out the others asking how they thought they could write a book when they didn't even know how to identify themselves. At that