

*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.*

THE  
NEW/OLD  
**NA**  
WAY

“ ... 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 Magazine

Volume 39

March 2021

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](mailto:nahelp.org@gmail.com)

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## Upcoming Events

### FELLOWSHIP LITERATURE CONFERENCE

Date: March 18th thru March 21st  
Findlay Ohio

### 16TH ANNUAL FELLOWSHIP SERVICE CONFERENCE FOR N.A.

Date: June 26th thru June 28th, 2021  
Hamburg, PA

### 2ND ANNUAL NORTHERN EAST COAST TRADITIONALIST GATHERING 2021

Date: July 10, 2021  
Pennsville NJ

### FELLOWSHIP LITERATURE CONFERENCE

Date: September 3th thru September 6th, 2021  
Tabernacle, NJ

### 6TH ANNUAL EUROPEAN FELLOWSHIP SERVICE CONFERENCE FOR N.A.

Date: September 16th thru September 19th, 2021  
Hunzel, The Netherlands

### ANNUAL 12 STEP RETREAT

Date: February 18, 19 & 20, 2022  
Columbiana Ohio

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## Weblinks

[www.nahelp.org](http://www.nahelp.org)

Contact: [nahelp.org@gmail.com](mailto:nahelp.org@gmail.com)  
World

[www.nahelp.nl](http://www.nahelp.nl)

Contact: [nahelp.nl@gmail.com](mailto:nahelp.nl@gmail.com)  
The Netherlands

[www.freerecovery.org.uk](http://www.freerecovery.org.uk)

United Kingdom

[www.nahelp.se](http://www.nahelp.se)

Sweden  
Contact: [AntilgenFriaNA@gmail.com](mailto:AntilgenFriaNA@gmail.com)

# 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, 18, 19&20, 2022

Das Dutch Village Inn

150 East State Route 14  
Columbiana, Ohio 44408

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

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**

NO addict EVER turned away!

**Pre-register by e-mailing [stepretreat@yahoo.com](mailto:stepretreat@yahoo.com)**

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

**Reserve your room by January 1, 2022 and mention you are with the NA Retreat to get the discounted price - Call 330-482-5050**



## Morning Light

How did we start our day in addiction? Changes are we started our day regretting the past, continuing using or started with planning our next fix.

In recovery we can still wake up feeling miserable or demotivated. In fear or stuck in negative thinking.

“JUST FOR TODAY my thoughts will be at my recovery, living and enjoying life without the use of drugs.”

We read this at every meeting. And it's something we can start practicing right from the start. We do not have any control over how we wake up. We do however have a choice in what our first action will be.

Our thinking is so used to think in self-destructive ways it is often that we wake up like that. And the results can be that we start to feel like we often do, depressed, lonely, afraid or resentful. Taking the time to focus our thoughts on our recovery can influence our day in a positive manner. We can do this by reading a page from a piece of NA literature. Another way is to write down things we are grateful for. We can start with the fact that we wake up clean and no longer must plan our next fix.

Recently a new piece of literature has been written by addicts. The Gratitude Journal. This is also a great tool to help us with focusing our thoughts on the positive. In here we can write down what we are grateful for, today what will make a success and we can write down something

positive in general.

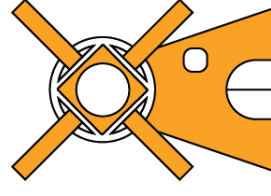
Doing this will help us find the courage and faith to get into the right action. Calling another addict in the morning is also very helpful. It immediately gives as proof that we are not alone, and that there are people like us on this planet who struggle with the same stuff we struggle with.

Another way to focus on our recovery in the morning is to pray. No matter if we believe in a god or not, we can still ask for help to stay clean that day. By saying it out loud we give it a change to become real. It is like putting the intention out there, making us ready to do what is necessary to make it come to live.

Over time these kind of morning actions will help us learn about spiritual principles, like commitment, willingness, and open-mindedness. Things we need in order to be able to grow and stay clean.

It is a gift that we can wake up and have a choice in how we start our day. For how long we did not have this choice at all. We should never forget that and start our day focusing on that miracle.

**Written By: Anonymous  
Addict From: The  
Netherlands'**



## European Fellowship Service Conference

16th - 19th September 2021



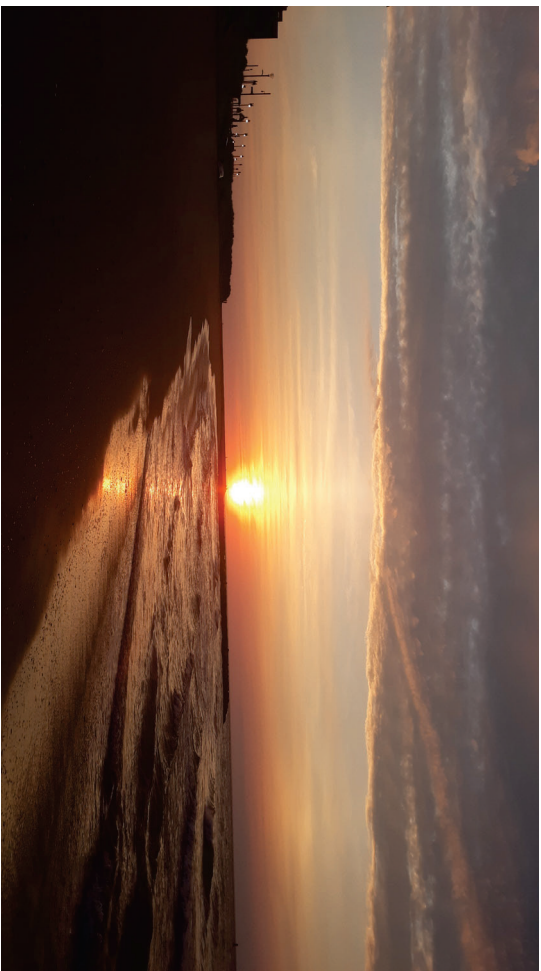
### Location:

Groepsaccommodatie Bekerhof, Beekstraat 9  
6013 RV Hunsel, the Netherlands

Price: € 125,- (All-Inclusive)

Register at [www.nahelp.nl](http://www.nahelp.nl)  
or email to [nahelp.nl@gmail.com](mailto:nahelp.nl@gmail.com)

Contact: 0031631304649



## Warning Signs

I recently had an experience with a spiritual and mental relapse in my personal recovery. By the time I caught it I could feel myself almost to a physical one. I had gotten a job after searching for so long in a field that I had been trying to get back into for 3 years. I accepted the job no question without talking about the hours with my sponsor. It was a second shift job and with 3 children and mostly night meetings my sponsor said it was a bad idea. I was so caught up from finally getting this job, THE job that I was angry my sponsor would even suggest not taking it. Not listening and yelling back about all the reasons it would work, there was a strain our sponsor-sponsee relationship. As soon as I started

working, I was excited but even after the first weeks the sign that I could not handle it were showing through. When I was at work everything was fine, I was happy. It was almost an escape from my home life, which was not horrible just chaotic with 3 children. When I was home, I was irritable, I didn't want to hear what my spouse was going through because I would go to bed at 2am and wake up with the kids so what did he have to complain about? I was not empathetic or appreciative.

I stopped eating regularly, smoking more, and drinking coffee as a meal replacement. My mind would race and my irritability because I lacked sleep overcame my home life. I felt like I could not keep up with anything, I stopped reading and writing. I was praying, sporadically at

## FELLOWSHIP LITERATURE CONFERENCE

September 3rd, 4th, 5th, & 6th , 2021



Open Participatory Literature Writing Conference

Literature Written by Addicts for Addicts!

110 Buttersworths Bogs Rd, Tabernacle NJ, 08088

**Cost: \$125 per Person**

**Price includes meals and lodging. 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 - Literature Coordinator -**

**Bill A (484) 951-3305: or e-mail – [matrixmatchclub@yahoo.com](mailto:matrixmatchclub@yahoo.com)**

**Check Out Our Web [www.nhhelp.org/](http://www.nhhelp.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, Blankets, Towels and Soap everything else provided)**

**{Doors Open at 10:00am on Friday and Close 2pm on Monday}**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E - Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Group Name \_\_\_\_\_ Register by August 20, 2021

Amount \$125.00 Check NO. \_\_\_\_\_

my network contact has improved, my daily maintenance routine has improved and my reliance on a Power Greater than myself is consistent and consuming, in a good way. I am lucky to have been able to stop this before I lost everything. I am grateful to still be a member. Some of us are not so lucky.

**Written by: An Anonymous Addict From: NJ.**

## **Our Groups Answer Back in 1992 and the Stance We Still Hold Today.**

We, The Recovery First Group of Narcotics Anonymous are writing in protest of decisions made by the World Service Conference. The WSC has chosen to violate the spiritual principles of Narcotics Anonymous, therefore WSC decisions are "null and void". We will not be bound by WSC decisions; Narcotics Anonymous is not bound by WSC decisions.

The World Service Conference has gone along with the World Service Office, World Service Board of directors, and the board of trustees in seeking power and control of the spiritual fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous that created them. They participated in the theft by deception of stealing the copyrights of The Basic Text of Narcotics Anonymous. These copyrights belong to the fellowship of

best, but I did not even feel like God was listening. Calling my Sponsor felt like a chore, it felt like he did not want to help me with the problems I was now having. The fact was I had made the choice and there was not anything he could help me with, I was not willing anymore. I thought I knew better. I was going to make this work because I was told I could not do it. That feeling of rebellion, of I know me, i know better.

After 3 weeks my attitude and unmanageability had seeped into my workplace. My manager approached me when I came in and began yelling, saying I needed to fix myself. I called my sponsor. I told him I was quitting. I had been beaten, this had taken a toll on my relationship, my health, my children, and most of all my recovery. Tired of spinning out of control and barely holding on I called and quit on the spot.

The Grey Book tells us the people in this program can help us stay clean, if we listen. That is what they are here for. I am convinced some of our members with multiple years of clean time can see a relapse a mile away. There is nothing the people in this program can do for us if we are not willing to work our programs. My sponsor had surrendered me and was waiting. Because no one has control over me. I was definitely humiliated but at the same time I have become humbled through this experience. My ego definitely took a hit. A few weeks have passed, and



July 10, 2021

454 Fort Mott Rd, Pennsville NJ 08070

[Fort Mott State Pavilion #2]

10:00 am to 7:00 pm

Potluck Lunch & Dinner



For More Information Call:  
 Matt F (856) 803-8857  
 Bill C (610) 809-9771

Hosted By: The Historical Perspective Group, The Most Perfect Vehicle Group, The Rabbit Meeting, & A Different Look Group of Narcotics Anonymous



Narcotics Anonymous as a whole, not to any service board or committee.

Our Basic Text was written by recovering addicts for addicts seeking recovery without support of the W.S.O., Inc. it was written by the NA members who participated in our literature movement during the late 70's and early 80's. Our book was not written as a "work for hire" but rather, we wrote our book as a labor of love. We entrusted the publishing of our book to the W.S.O.inc., with all intent that the fellowship would continue to "own" its own book with all the rights and responsibilities of that ownership. What has happened instead is that the W.S.O., Inc., with support of it's board of directors and the World Service Board of Trustees have manipulated changes in our text without seeking direction of the NA Fellowship. These World "service" entities have used the World Service conference as a vehicle to endorse their behavior while compromising the Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous.

World Services including most of its boards, committees and officers, participate in persecution of NA members who speak out against their policies. They even prosecuted one member by taking him into Federal Court for copyright infringements. They deliberately selected this member, only one of many involved, who is dying from the AIDS virus and did not have the financial backing to defend himself.

World Services in general and the WSO inc. specifically have used a large portion of the funds generated by sales of our book to provide "services" that were not requested by those they serve. A great deal of money has been spent to further their own singular perceptions through political style propaganda via their exclusive access to effective Fellowship-wide communication. This violation of our spiritual principles is expanded through world service travelworldwide, to personally manipulate the Fellowship, interfering with the group conscience process and influencing groups, area and regional committees and service offices to agree with their power and control political beliefs. NA world services regularly violate the principles of the ninth tradition including... "the ninth tradition goes on to define the nature of the things that we can do to help N.A. It says we may create service boards or committees to serve the needs of the fellowship.

None of them has the power to rule, censor, decide, or dictate. They exist solely to serve the fellowship, but they are not part of Narcotics Anonymous." (Basic Text Second Edition)

Throughout the years we have sought an internal financial audit of W.S.O., Inc. As the corporate arm of our world services, this non-profit organization is bound not only by federal 501(c) (3 regulations to fully report all revenues and expenditures,

## 16th Annual Fellowship Service Conference for N.A.

**When:** June 25<sup>th</sup> thru June 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**Where:** Hamburg, PA Place:

Olivet Mountain Camp

1540 Mountain Ave.  
Hamburg, Pa 19526

**Cost: \$105.00 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 NA**

**Projected Agenda:** How to get involved: Projected Agenda: Annual Conference Serving NA Home Groups through Group Conscience and Setting up services directly accountable to the groups through the Traditions. {Anonymi Foundation / A.S.I.S. for N.A.} **The Facility has asked us to Not Arrive before 4PM Registration starts at 4:30pm**

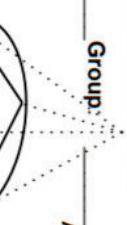
**For More Information: Contact Historical Perspective Group (610) 428-9923 Ask for Ray: or e-mail – [matrxmatchclub@yahoo.com](mailto:matrxmatchclub@yahoo.com) – Check Out Are Web - Page [www.nahelp.org/](http://www.nahelp.org/) Send check to: A.S.I.S. for NA P.O. Box 4404 Allentown, Pa 18105 Write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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E – Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Group: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount **\$105.00** \_\_\_\_\_

Check No. \_\_\_\_\_



*Adversity does not build character, it reveals it.  
More Will Be Revealed*

Send Check by June 6, 2021



# FELLOWSHIP LITERATURE CONFERENCE

March 18th, 19th, 20th & 21st , 2021



Open Participatory Literature Writing Conference  
Literature Written by Addicts for Addicts!

Camp Berry - 11716 County Rd 40 Findlay, OH 45840

**-Cost: \$125 per Person**  
Price includes meals and lodging. 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 - Literature Coordinator - Bill A (484) 951-3305: or e-mail — [matrixmatclub@yahoo.com](mailto:matrixmatclub@yahoo.com)  
Check Out Our Web [www.nahelp.org/](http://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, Blankets, Towels and Soap everything else provided)  
{Doors Open at 2:00pm on Thursday and Close 2pm on Sunday}

Name: ..... E - Mail: .....  
Address: ..... City ..... State: .....  
Zip: ..... Phone Number (.....) .....  
Group Name ..... Register by March 08, 2021  
Amount \$125.00 Check NO. ....

-Sponsored by the Historical Perspective Group & The War is Over Group of Narcotics Anonymous.  
For more information contact Matte B (419) 379-4659 or Tyler (419) 204-9915

but also morally and spiritually obligated, by its own guidelines, to be responsive and responsible to the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous.

There is a lack of financial accountability. We know that our book has bought in millions of dollars. Also, other literature has brought in a sizable amount of funding. Yet there has never been an outside internal audit done. We therefore request that the California Attorney General's office investigate WSO inc. on our behalf. WSO inc. is a non-profit corporation operating under California State laws, but they do the majority of their business throughout the world. We feel that they have violated their non-profit status and that individuals there use this non-profit status for personal gain.

## Recovery First Group of NA Allentown, PA - 1992

## Surrender to Changes.

Do you really think you can go back now?" That is the question my sponsor asked me few weeks ago. No, I cannot now. I am different. I know the truth. I started to act out in right direction, and I cannot come back.

I know the truth about NA history, about our literature, about our Traditions. WE know! Yes, I am not alone anymore, and I am glad to say that. I was there. Participated in irre-

sponsible service structure, have read professionally written books, shared and listened "partial abstinence" message. I was even unclear at meetings saying I am clean. I am Totally Abstinent now. I surrendered that ALL. I am done. I quit. But what have I to do afterwards? I know the answer because it is deeply inside of me. And I know it from the history, and from other like-minded members.

We have to translate and write books ourselves; we should avoid irresponsible service structure and we have to share Total Abstinence message. I was in fear for so long. I didn't believe that I would find another one member in my country with whom we share our beliefs. I was so desperate that I decided to start Grey book study meeting on my own, translate everything on my own. When everything was ready, my wise sponsor suggested me to wait a bit more... God works in mysterious ways. Immediately after I hanged on the phone, I mentioned missed call on my phone. I called back and there was my friend. He asked me questions. On literature. On Traditions 4 & 9. On history. Right questions. Why it is so, why we participate in problem so much? We have to change it.

Now while writing this text I am on the road. I am on my way to meet my NA friend. Together we translate reading cards from Grey book. We plan to open new, free, fully autonomous Group. We are Group already, just do not have meetings yet. We do

## Keep Moving Forward

not rush. We do not slow down things, we just do something that should be done. I cannot explain how cool it is - to translate literature together with someone with whom you share your views. Or write something. Now we can enjoy creative freedom of NA, which was stolen by corrupted service structure.

I feel myself better now, I was convinced in the words if my sponsor that I had to wait a bit more. Some time ago we found another one member in different town with whom we share our views. I see it is growing, something I felt never happen. Yes, sometimes there are days when everything seems meaningless. There are people now whom I can call and share. We can support each other, it's priceless really. Sometimes I scared about future, but I simply continue.

I am convinced that addict lives through the hope, by the hope and for the hope. The darkest times of us happen when we lose our hope. We share it. We hoped to get this next fix, pill or drink. We hoped to quit one day. We can stop using and stay clean when there is "we" instead of "I". And we do so. We share the hope at meetings. I have the hope today. Hope for changes. Changes I have surrender to. It grows.

**Written: By an Anonymous**

**Addict From: Moscow, Russia**

**АНОНИМНЫЕ НАКРОМАННЫ**

## Stockpile update Hengelo (Europe) 11/2020

October 2020	
Total worth	€1500
Greys	750
Blues	500
Ordered/Packed and/or Out	
Greys Sold	295
Blues Sold	200
Greys Stock left	455
Blues Stock left	300
Stock worth total	€907,50
Funds	
In Account	€773,99
On hold by PayPal	€90
Total funds	€863,99
Total Books & Funds per 14 November	€1771,49

## Report Financial Update FLC 2021

01/27/2021  
Opening Account :  
Total \$708.48

Receive 1 Registration \$125.00  
Receive 1 Registration \$125.00  
One Donation Received \$ 55.00

Total Closing Balance \$1013.48  
01/27/2021

I had a mental illness that I needed to take medication for gave me an excuse to take something to make me feel better and gave me an excuse for my behavior. It made it so I didn't have to change. I held onto this reservation about mental illness and medication until I had this relapse experience. I learned the hard way that I could not take drugs of any kind. The other good thing about treatment is that we read some NA literature and went to meetings. I found my home in NA and I knew that it was the path for me.

Since this relapse experience, I have grown a lot and have seen several other addicts come off prescribed medication. I have struggled for a while with my significant other being on a psychotropic med and being in NA with her. I was frozen with fear in this situation and was stuck between enabling her disease by allowing her to think that she was clean or telling her the truth and dealing with the consequences of that. I was terrified that my relationship would be over. What I ended up doing was praying and turning it over to God. I knew that when I tried to force and control things that the results were always disastrous. Over the last month some events took place with her that led to her deciding to come off her medication. A close friend of ours died from this disease and she saw herself acting out in her disease after that. The basic text says that: Recovery as experienced through our Twelve

Steps is our goal, not mere physical abstinence. To improve ourselves, takes effort, and since there is no way in the world to graft a new idea on a closed mind, an opening must be made somehow. Since we can do this only for ourselves, we need to recognize two of our seemingly inherent enemies, apathy and procrastination. Our resistance to change seems built in, and only a nuclear blast of some kind will bring about any alteration or initiate another course of action. A relapse, if we survive it, may provide the charge for the demolition process. A relapse and sometimes subsequent death of someone close to us can do the job of awakening us to the necessity for vigorous personal action. I got to see this paragraph in action throughout this situation. Using drugs to treat our disease is what we always did. It does not matter where we get those drugs or whether they are legal or not. I believe that if we do not surrender and open our minds to complete abstinence an opening will be made somehow if we are this fortunate. Many of us do not get this last chance.

**Written By: An Anonymous  
Member From: North Carolina,  
USA**

life on life's terms. Are we using the eleventh step to understand that we no longer need to run, it is through prayer and meditation we will be given the answers, oh, I know maybe not, what we wanted, but this I know it will be what we need?

Just for today, I will trust in the light that is guiding me on my journey, knowing that his plans for me truly are better than anything that I could come up with. He has provided us with solutions through our spiritual principles in which we can use to overcome the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual issues in which we will encounter today. We know that the Light is real for each day we are experiencing that miracle we call recovery. May your day be filled with solutions to that in which are ailing you? May your passion for recovery continued to grow or may it be reignited allowing you to move forward as your message is crucial to others and their survival from addiction. Love and hugs

**Written: By an Anonymous  
Addict From: Michigan, USA**



## **Some quotes out of the BT on Self-pity**

*"We 'forgot' the times we sat alone consumed by fear and self-pity."*

*"We felt angry, disappointed and hurt when they had other interests, friends and loved ones. We regretted the past, dreaded the future, and we weren't too thrilled about the present. After years of searching, we were more unhappy and less satisfied than when it all began."*

*"Before coming to the fellowship, we exhausted ourselves trying to 'use' successfully, or trying to find out what was wrong with us."*

*"We could not live and enjoy life as other people do."*

*"We reached a point in our lives where we felt like a lost cause."*

*"Petty frustrations, minor setbacks and loneliness often made us feel that we were not getting any better."*

*"We felt different."*

*"In Step Four, we begin to get in touch with ourselves. We write about our liabilities such as guilt, shame, remorse, self-pity, resentment, anger, depression, frustration, confusion, loneliness, anxiety, betrayal, hopelessness, failure, fear and denial."*

*"No one is forcing us to give up our misery."*

*"The denial of our disease and other*



reservations keep us sick.”

“We could be suffering from an overly sensitive ego. Some of the most common excuses for using are loneliness, self-pity and fear.”

“There is something in our self-destructive personalities that cries for failure. Most of us feel that we do not deserve to succeed. This is a common theme with addicts, Self-pity is one of the most destructive of defects. It will drain us of all positive energy. We focus on anything that isn't going our way and ignore all the beauty in our lives. With no real desire to improve our lives, or even to live, we just keep going further and further down. Some of us never make it back.”

“When we refuse to practice acceptance, we are, in effect, still denying our faith in a Higher Power. Worrying is the practice of lack of faith.”

“Our viewpoint changes from that of a loner to that of a member.”

“Through the love we receive in our fellowship we begin to feel lovable ourselves, a feeling totally alien to our old egocentric selves.”

“If, while practicing these principles, we allow ourselves to feel superior or inferior, we isolate ourselves. We are headed for trouble if we feel “apart from” other addicts.”

**Written: By an Anonymous Addict From: The Netherlands**

## Knowledge vs Surrender

Knowledge vs Surrender

One of our Predecessors reminds us that knowledge is not a substitute for Surrender. Some Groups are racing and even violating basic Spiritual Principles to supply other Groups under the 7th Tradition guide to have Literature ready for those who want it. Some members forget we're not a publishing company for books, like in the case of naws. What is our real primary purpose? Are we just supplying books or are we Living the Principles that our Literature is teaching us? Supplying Literature should not be our primary purpose. This part of the Literature movement is just a cornerstone of the Traditionalist movement. The studying and actual application of Spiritual Principles contained in our Literature should be our source and strength. Competing to get Literature to the hands of Groups opens the door to profiting and violating our 7th Tradition not practicing it. They are Groups that already are doing this and affecting NA as a whole. As in the case of our FSC minutes and things that did or did not take place then at the Conference. Many members and Groups were affected negatively without their knowledge. Disunity in any guise can and will have their start without most members knowledge. That is why Unity is a must and will not happen automatically, and without our efforts.

counted as using because I didn't get high. After that I started to rely on the program more and started to read the literature to get a better understanding of it for myself. I never really thought about the fact that total abstinence means total abstinence and that NA can't be all things to all people. The meetings I went to were basically group therapy sessions where anything goes. It felt like a mixed message from a bunch of different fellowships but mostly treatment. The only message that I did not hear was the Narcotics Anonymous message of complete abstinence from all mood changing substances and mind-altering chemicals. The friends that hung out with were in NA and on different psychotropic medications and when I had around what I thought was seventeen months clean I found myself in a depressive state where I felt stuck and did not know what to do. My friend suggested that I go see a psychiatrist because normal people do not think the way I do. This situation enabled my disease so instead of using a more rigorous application of the program, I went to the doctor and got mood changing drugs.

It took no more than ten minutes at the psychiatrist for me to be diagnosed and have a prescription written. The medication quickly altered my mind which felt good at first but after the first day my anxiety and depression was worse than ever. I stopped taking it, my sponsor did

not consider this using because I was prescribed it by and “informed” healthcare professional. The state I was in after this use of drugs, was not good. I was working on a fourth step which I stopped working on and my girlfriend was about to give birth to my daughter. When my girlfriend was prescribed pain killers for her c-section they were in our house for about twenty minutes before I took one. This time when I told my sponsor that I took one he told me it was a relapse. The truth is me seeking medication for symptoms of my disease was a relapse.

This experience was very painful for me but I am so grateful for it today because it helped me to understand what addiction is and why NA is a program of complete abstinence. How are we supposed to recover at the level of feelings and emotions if our feelings and emotions are dictated by drugs? I started to realize how Narcotics Anonymous is different from other fellowships and different from treatment. We are not affiliated with any of these outside entities and they can be a danger to our recovery. Even though I went to treatment and have learned to stay clean through NA my views on treatment have changed. The best thing that happened as a result of going to treatment is that I got away from the life. I was in a somewhat protective bubble. I say somewhat because there were several things there that enabled my disease. Being told that

to live the steps to keep us functioning at our highest level spiritually.

When we stop, we have nothing left in our tank. Make no mistake, making our new way of life that we have found in the NA Fellowship leads us to weakness and that leads to spiritual death. Maintenance is a must as we learn to depend on the God, we found in the first 3 steps and grew closer to as we learned to live the other 9. Only when each member is doing their part does the body grow. This is a fellowship of one addict helping another. Service work is our way of staying committed, showing affection and considering how to show another to love and good works. But when we do so, little by little, we remain closer to one another and the body functions at its highest level.

Some Acts of Maintenance

Prayer – Stay connected with God on a regular basis!  
Private Maintenance – Make time for God personally. Make opportunities to talk to God

We know we should get that check engine light looked at and not ignore squealing brakes or laundry and dishes that are piling up. We know by putting it off we are getting ourselves into worse shape! The same is true spiritually. Do the works of spiritual maintenance. Our recovery depends on it.

In this moment: I will have a program and with the NA Fellowship and the help of our higher power God we will have a program and work it to

the best of our abilities

When I first arrived in Narcotics Anonymous almost four years ago it was recommended to me that I go to treatment. I went to one or two NA meetings before that and didn't really understand what was going on. When I went to treatment, they started taking us to all kinds of different fellowship's meetings and I was told that it was all pretty much the same thing. It seemed like there was this general message of recovery from addiction but there was this overwhelming sense of recovery from addiction being different for everyone.

During my 62 day stay in this treatment center I was diagnosed with clinical depression. My counselor explained to me that I will always have to work on my recovery from addiction and recovery from depression separately. I began taking a couple of different medications at that time. One to wake up and one to help me go to sleep. I continued taking this medication for a few months until one day I was at a meeting and read the card for What Is the Narcotics Anonymous Program? This time reading it, the words "This is a program of complete abstinence from all drugs." stuck out to me differently. The words from that reading made an impression on me that stuck with me and I realized that I was using a drug to try to manage the way I felt. I decided then and there to stop taking it.

At that time, I didn't think that this

One particular Group has been supplying some Literature to other Groups and that is ok, no other motive has been the case. Any one Group can do the same. When we add suspicion, jealousy and envy that is when the disease takes over. That's when Groups turn against each other and does not allow Creative Freedom to take place. Instead, self-will.

**Written: By an Anonymous Addict From: NY State USA**

## Filling the Void with God

We had a bonfire meeting last night and read from the Grey Book. We read a page out of the 12th Step. As everyone was sharing, I began to think. We were talking about having acceptance, which would be great to have right from the beginning, so we aren't so hard on ourselves! I realized that before my using I had a lot of these defects and needs to fill a void way before I ever picked up a drug. I always tried to suppress these feelings with items, relationships, friendships, money. I thought maybe I could smother them if I just had the right combination of "stuff" and in my using I tried combinations of drugs thinking well it worked the very first time I used maybe since its not working anymore I need something else. All through my process of working on this 2nd step I keep trying to fill this

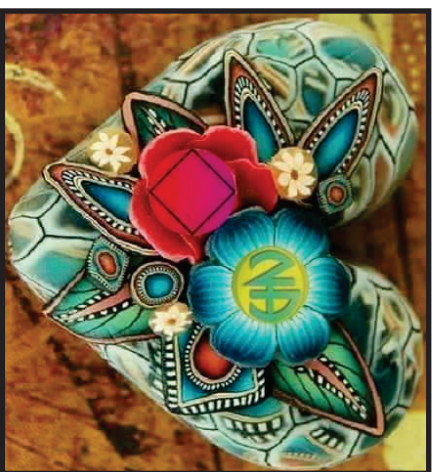
void, I keep trying to get acceptance from the same old stuff. Relationship, children, job, money all of this never helping me to accept myself or life as it is. When reading the 2nd step there is a lot of talking of members coming in and having a hard time with this step. Maybe they were brought up in a religious household and have a resentment with religion, maybe they are atheist or agnostic. I honestly think that people might have a hard time with this concept of a higher power because instead of filling that void with worldly things and emotional things, they need to fill it with a Greater Power. Its constant contact, every moment, every feeling, every trigger. Praying and learning to use a Higher Power as 2nd nature, immediate go to, habit. When we were reading last night there was a line that says, "We cannot throw out old ideas without replacing them."

Grey Book pg. 65 line 3. To toss out this thinking and these old ways that I have gotten through situations my whole life, where am I to go? I think that is why this program is set up the way it is because the 12 steps along with the spiritual principles that need to be practiced will help start to heal and live life productively. So, practicing acceptance and the fact that I have to learn how to use a Power Greater than myself every day, most of the day to be able to move forward and live a productive life is kind of intimidating. But our book also says "This sounds like a big order and



we can't do it all at once, we didn't become addicted in one day, so remember- EASY DOES IT." Knowing that my life was never perfect before drugs why would I assume life would be perfect after? It's just life, things happen, time ebbs and flows, and eventually as I learn to fill this void with the God of my understanding I will move forward and become a person, not completely different and not able to handle every situation perfectly. I will become a person who can live and enjoy life and be productive and helpful to the newcomer. I will move from self-centeredness to God centeredness and learn to accept the things I cannot change, have the courage to change the things I can, and always pray for the wisdom to know the difference.

**Written: By an Anonymous Addict From NJ, USA**



## Mindset

Lately I have been noticing that I naturally start to apply certain things that are Gods will for me which is of course the purpose of the Program. It is a beautiful thing.

I am so much more aware of the actions I CAN take. And more often than not, I do the right things because I know they work. In the past I maybe also knew what the right thing was to do, but I would do them once every so often, not on a structural basis because:

- I did not know I was an addict
- I did not have a program
- I did not have fellows, friends, a sponsor who have the same disease
- I tried to manage everything on my own
- My destructive power was greater than my loving one

So, I do not blame myself for not being able to manage life before. Now I am in such a different place, so much has changed in a such a relatively short period of time. Every day I have a choice to ask for Gods help, to call people before I make decisions etc. Also, today I am free to act on the temptation I am faced with. I am free to do what I want. But with this freedom comes responsibility. And I have to carry the consequences as well. And for me sanity is this: being very aware of these, in this case, negative destructive consequences and there-

new skills, and slowly we become more accustomed to this new way of life. We find purpose in life because of N.A. We are able to live a dream life. We are growing. To keep growing we must surrender and be there for those after us. After all that is how we were able to recover.

**Written: By an Anonymous Addict From: The Netherlands**

## Recovery Depends on Maintenance

When we first come into the fellowship of NA, we are drained we have lived on our own power for so long and our lives have become so unmanageable that we are spiritually empty. See if you can relate to the following scenario. We are driving along, and our check engine light comes on. At first, we are worried. The warning grabs our attention. We consider doing something about it but somehow it never gets done. Over some time, we hear a noise, a rattle, a squeak. Finally, we bring our car to a mechanic who hands you a bill of a significant amount and says something that resembles the following:

"If only we had brought this in sooner it would not have been as costly a repair." Can we relate to that experience?

Perhaps a similar scenario has happened to us in recovery we are

fortunate that in Narcotics Anonymous we not, handed a bill there are no dues to pay or promises to make we are led to a loving and caring God and given 12 steps as the tools for life the only requirement is a desire to stop using

The moral of this is – the importance of maintenance. There are even preventative kinds. It is why we change (work with our sponsor) oil filters (work the steps) spark plugs, (prayer meditation) do housework and chores little by little so things don't pile up and get overwhelming! (attend meetings)

We do little jobs, day by day, read our literature so we can prevent big problems. The fact of the matter is the job of maintenance is never really done, it is no different spiritually! There are acts and efforts of spiritual maintenance in the life of a recovering addict that is a must if we want to stay clean. And what is worse, if you neglect these spiritual acts of maintenance, we are not just talking a large expense or a ruined motor. We are talking about a ruined life. Our lives are in jeopardy. We are talking about falling away from God and there being no guarantee that you'll come back, even if there is a remedy relapse is not a requirement but unfortunately, it is a reality we have to attend funerals far too often NA is a simple spiritual, not a religious program that we must maintain to stay clean running at our highest level spiritually! That is the point of maintenance. We must learn



are to keep growing. We will have to embrace our new way of life and take actions that are going to get us closer to that in which we are in the process of becoming. Today I know that I am a spiritual being in a human body, having a human experience, and as my spirit matures my human wants, are no longer as important as I believe they once were. I am being set free of the bondage of myself to live life, not in fear but with faith in which I cannot see but what I am experiencing, I am never alone anymore.

Just for today, I will continue to walk in and with the light of recovery maintaining my recovery by incorporating the 12 steps and traditions in all of my affairs, not only when it is convenient to me. Never let that deep-seated fear stop you from attaining that in which you are worthy and deserving of, as you are priceless. Remember this that recovery is a never-ending source of those beautiful gifts that await our arrival. Yes, recovery does work but we must learn to live within the spiritual principles of it if we are to receive the benefits, of what the NA program has to offer us.

**Written: By an Anonymous Addict From: Michigan, USA**

## **Control and Fear V.S. Surrender and Growth**

the reasons we once started doing drugs might vary from person

to person. One may start out of boredom, while someone else started to be accepted by others. Either way fear seems to play a big role in it. It certainly does when we wanted to stop and realized we could not anymore. We became too comfortable with the drugs induced lifestyle and the false feeling of being in control. At a certain point we lost track of reality and life became unbearable.

Many died, but some were lucky and found N.A.

Coming in Narcotics Anonymous we learn that to be able to have a productive and happy life we have to let go of our old egotism and on fear-based decisions are a stumble block where it used to be "lifesaving" We had to stop making excuses and face those fears. Afraid of failing again we hesitated, but this time we were not alone. For the first time in our life, we had other people in our lives that could help us. People that were like us and were already on the process of recovery. If we are so affected by others opinion why not by those who mean well and could truly understand us.

Those people some might call fellows, others call them family, and some do not call them at all, but for those who did, know that it was the first step towards self-acceptance. by having a sponsor and good folk in our lives we learn to deal with the challenges and problems that lie in front of us. They help us acquire

fore not ACT on them.

Insanity is the opposite: also, being aware of the consequences of a decision, but do it anyway because I follow my will.

Just for today I choose sanity, which is so awesome and so not me, but it will be. Thank you, God.

I also do want to act like I am unaware of what is happening in the world. I know what is happening, but I make a conscious decision to not be involved with it and to not let it get to me. Despite this self-protection, I do feel there's soooooo much injustice in the world. I cannot begin to explain how much. If I really feel this, I will die of sadness. That is why I choose not to do it. I wish I could change the world, but I have to be honest: I don't think I have the courage to really take a stand. FEAR wins in that aspect. I do admire people who fight for their (our) rights. I just wanted to share this.

Sometimes I forget that is a daily Program. I sometimes still wonder why I need to call again. Like today: Do I really need to call my sponsor again? I call her every day and see her a lot, maybe she thinks I call too much. These are thoughts. BUT-----> YES, I need to call, because AGAIN, it helps. Tomorrow I will do it again. I tend to forget that I am doing myself a big favor to get connected with people in NA.

ALSO: I am so proud of my Home-group, we are doing an awesome job. (no arrogance)

Also: I AM worth recovery, to try a new way of living.

EVERY addict is worth this new way of life. I pray for every suffering addict.

**Written: By an Anonymous Addict From: The Netherlands**

## **Changing My Clean Date**

My original clean date is 12/11/2018. On that day, I heard a message of hope, got an NA sponsor, committed myself to at least one NA meeting a day for my first 90 days in recovery, found home, and surrendered. I got and stayed clean up until this moment, or so I thought. That day means a lot to me and will forever more. When I heard it read in meetings that "this is Program of complete abstinence from all drugs" I felt and thought that I was totally free from all mood-changing mind-altering drugs. Over the course of my recovery and in the process of the Steps and Traditions, I've learned that what I feel and what I think is not always what is.

If you are reading this, it's likely that you know what the drug Vivitrol is. If you do not, it's a drug administered in a shot every 28-30 days that blocks other drugs (opiates and alcohol) from having their desired effect in your brain. The drug of Vivitrol inhibits getting high from those particular classes of drugs. In other words, it is

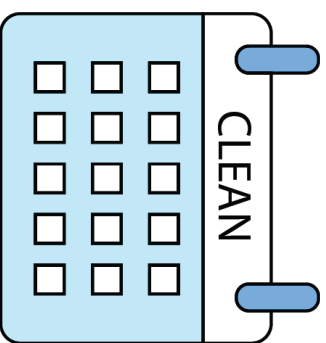
a DRUG used to treat the disease of addiction.

I was fresh off my eighth stint in a treatment facility in one year (talk about insanity!). For a long time, I would use, and fantasize about the day I would finally be able to get on the Vivitrol shot thinking it would solve all of my problems. You can't get on it until you have had two weeks clean from the drugs that it blocks, and that was a seemingly impossible feat in my addict brain that was constantly hijacked by the obsession and compulsion to use more. I would say, "If can just get two weeks and get on the shot, I will FINALLY be ok!" The last treatment facility I was in, I signed off on being locked down for those two weeks of hell and was then put on the shot. During those two weeks my Bunkie had such a strong desire to use that he left, and when he did, he left the NA Basic Text he signed out on his bed stand. I picked it up, having no clue what it was. I opened it up to "Who Is an Addict?" and started reading. I could not put it down. I found identification and HOPE. I read the entire book because it was written by addicts like me. When I tried to read the books of other fellowships, I could not even stay awake, or retain any of it. Something was different about the Basic Text and the seed was planted.

I soon felt no need to seek help from something greater than myself (NA) after I "graduated" the treatment facility, freshly loaded with a body full

of drug blockers. I could not get high on my "drug of choice" (or drug of no choice if you prefer), I learned a bunch of nonsense from prestigious counselors that had never been where I was, and oh yeah, I read that NA book which had some pretty good stuff in it. I was cured! Hahaha.

Reading the Basic Text got through to me enough that my first day out of that facility, I went to my first Narcotics Anonymous meeting. It was weird. candlelight, people hugging, I didn't know what to think of this strange cult like meeting. I did not really dig it, but the hugs were nice. I stayed with family that night, and the next day when I got my car back... BAM back off to the races. I hit the ground running using drugs. You see, Vivitrol blocks certain drugs, but not all of them, and when I could not use those drugs, I quickly found that I'll take anything to feel different than the way I feel. Eventually it all feels the same, and I found myself completely powerless and my life was more unmanageable than ever.



## Resistance to Letting Go is Never the Key to Change

Recovery is providing us with what we need to grow and mature on the journey in which we are blessed to be traveling. With the applications of our principles, we are learning to live the NA way of life. We have been set free and been shown a way of life in which we could have never believed possible. But first, we must first recognize and accept that recovery is more than just a physical addiction, but our disease also involves the mental, emotional, and spiritual being. We will never change our lives until we are ready to step out of the darkness of addiction and accept this truth. We must become willing to lay down those old morals and values in which we use to survive. We must let go, of that in which we know to begin this new way of life, with acceptance and surrender we pick up the spiritual principles of our steps for they are the tools in which will allow us to find that in which we seek. Recovery is possible but we must be willing to change. Resistance to letting go is never the key to change, in fact, it is the direct source of our pain and discomfort. Perhaps we will run into a period of personal unhappiness, which will reveal that our morals, principles, and values are misplaced once again, and we are on the wrong path. Unless we take action and change

our attitudes, values, and ideas, we will continue to experience discontentment and put our recovery at risk. Resistance and our unwillingness to let go control is keeping us locked in that self-imposed prison of addiction where our fear is growing daily, it is the indication of our spiritual and mental issues in which the disease of addiction is feeding upon. Our need to control our journey has history and looking back, we can see all the darkness in which our self-centeredness created. We are not good managers, and our choices seem to keep us moving down the path of destruction. No longer do we need to walk this journey in the darkness blinded by our denial. No longer do justification and rationalizations bring relief to us, as we can no longer hide from the reality of our actions. As today thanks to NA and sponsorship, we see the truth and we can no longer hide from it, we must change to find recovery and all of those gifts that are awaiting our arrival.

Through the application of our spiritual principles, our beliefs, values, and moralistic ways of dealing with life has changed. With our new ideas and attitudes, we are enjoying life in which we could have never imagined being possible. Our steps and traditions have and will continue to provide us with the roadmap for the type of life that we are experiencing as we move forward in our life of recovery. Our desire to change must be greater than our desire to stay the same if we



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## Just Believe

*If we feed our mind with sickness*

*We stay sick*

*If we feed our mind with recovery*

*We recover*

*If we stop believing in God*

*We never see the light.*

*And when road is hard never give up*

*And never stop believe because every setback is a way to get you stronger and growing inside*

*And when it feels dark and the feeling of given up is coming always remember is all ways*

*darkest before sunrise*

*And Always remember deep inside in your heart that you are never alone.*

**From: Sweden**



I will not get into the gritty details of that period, but life was a horrific nightmare despite my "magic shot in the ass."

Over the next two months, I would hustle and use until I ran out of money and drugs, then come to NA crying about how bad my life was and how I wanted recovery. I clearly could not grasp the concept of this being a Program of Action. Then I would leave and go use. Despite my failed drug tests, the treatment center continued to give me Vivitrol. I finally ran out of drugs and money for the last time on 12/10/2018. The next day 12/11/2018 I was 100% spiritually, mentally, physically, emotionally, and financially bankrupt. I walked into an NA meeting with my tail between my legs, and for the first time, I just listened (prior to that I mostly came and shared about crazy shit like how "hardcore" I was). When I finally shut up and listened, the stars lined up and put the right addicts in the right room with me to share a clear NA message. Our language got brought up and why we refer to ourselves as "clean" instead of "sober." I was pissed enough to talk about it after the meeting. An hour and a half later, I knew I found home, I knew I found a solution and I knew I was done.

A couple weeks later on December 27th, 2018 I was scheduled for my Vivitrol shot. I remember telling my family about my newfound hope, all the meetings I was attending, and starting the Steps. I truly felt I was

done with drugs, and the obsession to use them started lifting immediately as I surrounded myself with fellow NA's. I told my family how I didn't need the Vivitrol shot anymore... for one it never worked, and two I found a REAL solution. Their reaction was something like John Travolta in the overdose scene of Pulp Fiction, "JUST GET THE SHOT!!!!!" My mother actually cried saying that if I did not get the shot, I would die. I could understand her pain, and the fact that I only had a couple weeks clean, so I got the shot despite my lack of need for it. That was the last Vivitrol shot I would get, as I decided the next month that I was not on a pink cloud of treatment and that I had stumbled into a Living Solution with NA.

As I write this, it is now 12/10/2020, nearly two years after my original clean date. In doing my best to live The Program of Narcotics Anonymous, it has hands down been the best one year and 364 days of my life. The more I get into this Program, the more I get out of it. I look back on how much has changed for me in this Program and how my perception of this Program, what it actually is, and how powerful it is has changed. The more I read our literature, read about our history, talk with other addicts and share, the more I learn. I've learned that this is not "Drug of Choice Anonymous." I've learned that in Narcotics Anonymous, if I'm not Totally Abstinent from ALL mood-changing mind-altering drugs then I haven't



truly admitted my powerlessness and unmanageability in Step One. I've learned that in NA, we don't find the freedom offered here by using drugs of any kind to get through the moment... we use The Program of NA and a God of our own understanding. I've learned that when I use drugs to treat my disease, I don't allow myself to experience the pain required to seek something greater than myself for relief from my disease.

What it comes down to is I believe in the Power of this beautiful Program, and the freedom it has given me. I live and share a message of Total Abstinence, the message of NA... it's time I practice what I share and do my best to be an example of that message to the newcomer. I didn't know that taking drugs to treat my disease wasn't in line with the Program when I got here. Hell, I didn't even take that last Vivitrol shot to treat my disease. I took it to get my family off my back! However, the fact of the matter is that I DID take a drug that's used to treat my disease after my clean date, one that I knew would slowly release in my body for up to 30 days. Today in trying to live the NA Program to the best of my ability, claiming clean time I do not really have does not sit right in my spirit. I've talked to addicts about this for over a year and EVERYONE seems to have a different answer for what they would do in my situation, including my sponsor, addicts I'm close with, and even including people in the "traditionalist" crowd. I couldn't

get a clear answer from anyone, so I decided to let our literature share its experience, strength, and hope with me. I've prayed and meditated on this for a long time, and ultimately, the only clean time I have attachment to is the clean time I have just for today.

Long story short I'm changing my clean date. My original clean date was 12/11/2018. Sixteen days after that on 12/27/2018 I had a drug administered into my body that treats the disease of addiction. I took it knowing that it releases over the course of 30 days. I could make my clean date 30 days after that, but for sake of simplicity and knowing FOR SURE that I was clean on my clean date, I've decided to make my new clean date 2/1/2019, and it feels good, it feels right. I was actually clean that day, and every day since then. My new clean date is true and does sit right in my spirit.

I am very grateful for the experiences I had with using drugs to treat my disease because it taught me one of the most important awakenings I've had in NA... I cannot fix a spiritual problem with a physical solution. Much love to all those who keep the NA message alive, for without it I would not have come to this realization.

With gratitude,

**Written: By an Anonymous Addict From: Ohio, USA**

things and when it interferes with carrying the message to the addict who still suffers it is not the time to do so.

If our common welfare comes first, we will know that by doing anything to get an addict to come to our meeting, even if it were to be violating our Traditions would be wrong.

If we were to verify an attendance document before the meeting, after the meeting, in the parking lot, at a diner we would be violating our Traditions. There's no excuse to do so.

Yes, NAWS is an outside issue and if we have no opinion on outside issues then we should clearly see that to discuss an outside issue within our meeting would be a contradiction.

When we focus on our Groups efforts, with carrying the message to the addict who still suffers, by doing Public Information outside of our Groups or H&I we will stay in line with our Fifth Tradition. No one else can carry our message but us. When an addict finds us, we have an hour, hour and a half, two or three hours to carry the message. Our message may be the only message they ever hear. Addicts are dying daily and if we are sitting around during our meeting time discussing how screwed up the NAWS service structure is we are doing the addict a disservice.

Personally, I believe the Traditions should be discussed at a certain time within the Group. The Steps are the solution for the addict and the Traditions are the solution for the

Group. Tradition meetings are just that, talking about service and how to apply the Traditions within the Group. So, if we are sitting there discussing service how does that help the addict who still suffers? It does not. It can create a service-based recovery program. Not a recovery-based service program.

In order to understand the Twelve Traditions and how to apply those Traditions first we need to understand the Twelve Steps mean.

If we do not have God in our lives, if we are still struggling to have a clear understanding of what total abstinence means, then we cannot understand what the Traditions mean. In conclusion, I find it to be quite simple. We can show addicts how to get clean, stay clean, and live clean.

We do not have to tell them to go anywhere else and we do not give them the reason to think they need to go anywhere else.

We can show them how to get off drugs, even those drugs that a doctor may tell them that they need to take for the rest of their lives because they are "wired" differently.

We share a message of complete abstinence from all mind-altering mood changing chemicals. We share a message of hope and promise of freedom.

We do not share a message of insanity, resentment, hostility, and anger. We share a solution.

**Written: By an Anonymous Addict From: South NJ, USA**

welfare first (humility, anonymity) actually enhance my personal recovery. If personal recovery depends on NA unity, then NA unity must depend on personal recovery. NAWOL says, "Our common welfare hinges not so much on our ability to impose uniformity as it does with every individual member's willingness to surrender any defect standing in the way of unconditional love and acceptance of our fellows."

As our text says, the traditions truly are the ties that bind us together. When the 12 Traditions are not applied in the group and the 12 Steps are not applied personally, disunity grows. For example, when individuals won't surrender to group conscience; when competition to impress becomes more important than contribution to the general welfare; when an atmosphere of dissension prevails in our groups over an atmosphere of recovery, unity falls by the wayside. When we express opinions on outside issues, such as advocating specific treatment modalities, religions, politics, etc.; as well as all the other ways in which group members can step outside the traditions, we separate ourselves.

How can I contribute towards unity in Narcotics Anonymous? When I express that unconditional love, that empathy, that acceptance for other members and become part of a greater whole, my ego is deflated, and my recovery is enhanced. Our spiritual connection with each other's

personal recovery creates one of the strongest ties binding us together. I promote unity by behaving with humility and anonymity and by gladly being of service to the group. I try to be accepting and tolerant of all addicts. When I can accept group conscience and apply the traditions to my behavior in the group I strive for unity.

**Written: By an Anonymous Addict From: Florida, USA**

## **Carry the Message Not the Mess**

A Group has one primary purpose and that is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.

Our message is not taking more drugs. Our message is not force addicts into our meetings. Our message is not politics.

When we meet in our Group, we carry the message to the addict who still suffers, and that is all.

Too many times we see meetings turn off the tracks and turn into a political discussion. Talking about how NAWOL is destroying our Fellowship, what rights we have to print, anything but our message. It can turn into an hour and a half discussion that doesn't help the newcomer at all.

It is understandable that our past should not be forgotten, so we do not repeat the same actions. There is a time and place to discuss these

## **The Path**

*As long as I follow this path - I have nothing to fear*

*As long as I follow this path - I will remain surrendered*

*As long as I follow this path - I will never be alone again*

*As long as I keep coming back - I will not go astray from the path*

*As long as I follow this path - I will continue to grow*

*As long as I follow this path - self-centeredness will fade-away*

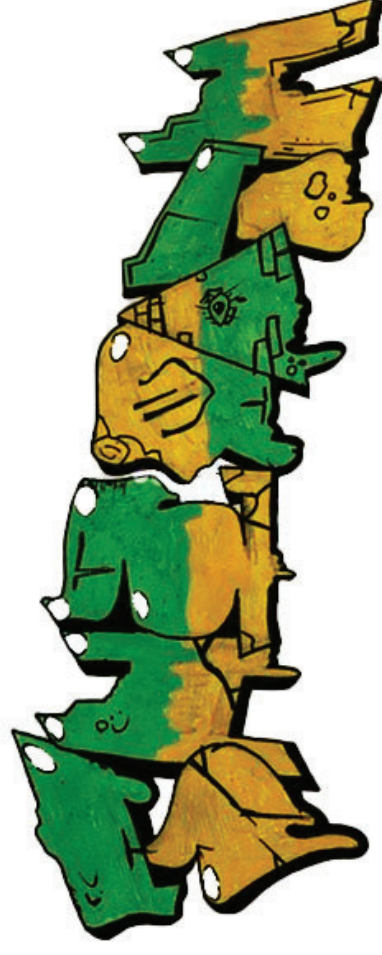
*As long as I follow this path - others will join beside me*

*As long as I follow this path - I will experience true freedom*

*As long as I follow this path - the spirit will stay awakened*

*As soon as I get off this path - the destination is jails, institutions, or death*

**From: Sweden**





## Hope Can be Powerful

Hope can be powerful it is the strongest driving force in which we get to experience, hope brings about change, which has the power to create new realities that open the door to recovery and freedom in which we as recovering addicts get to live with today. No longer do we walk in the nightmare of addiction or live in the hell of what we came to know as life. Perhaps there is no such thing as magic in our words or coincidences that can explain the transformation that has taken place in our life and our journey, but this I know that our spiritual principles have the ability to change our life. Life was hard and often my choices led me down the road of complete devastation. Life had come to the point in which I lived in total humiliation and despair, I was lost in the world of darkness and hopelessness, and I could see no escape from the grips of our disease.

I have come to see, and I am convinced that the best way not to feel hopeless is to get up and begin to do something, as movement brings relief. We do not wait for good things to happen to us, we must explore and discover the path that will lead us out of that hopeless state of desperation, as the truth will be revealed to us, as we continue to move forward. Through the application of our spiritual principles, we are set free, we get to make choices that allow us to walk out of the darkness of our addic-

tion and into the light of our recovery. I understand and live-in faith that the light that is filled with hope will arrive during those moments of darkness and my weakness, when life is filled with pain and disappointments hope will bring faith back into our journey, reigniting our thirst for our recovery. No matter how painful and hard life on life's terms comes to be, we must never give up for the miracle of recovery will happen. Remember that we are lovable, worthy, and deserving of all of the beautiful treasures that recovery brings us, along with all of those most beautiful moments that continue to await our arrival, as more will be revealed to us, that is as our spirit becomes ready to see the truth of the gifts that are there. Do not overlook what you have been given on this journey, by desiring what you do not have. Remember that what you now have was once among the things you hoped for.

Just for today, our challenges are what make life and our journey interesting, facing them with our principles is what makes life meaningful, it fills our spirit with hope, and leads us to freedom in which we get to use that powerful gift of choice. Not all of my choices will be correct, some will fall short, and setbacks will become part of my journey. If you find you cannot handle me during these times of my trials and tribulations or when I am at my worsted, then you do not deserve me when I am at my best, for I am always me. For this, I know I am in the

process of becoming that in which the Light has intended me to be, as today I am me in the making.

**Written By: Anonymous**

**Addict From: Michigan, USA**



## Unity, Common Welfare and Personal Recovery?

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on N.A. unity."

What is unity in Narcotics Anonymous? Some addicts define unity in terms of us all showing up at dances, picnics, conventions or other functions. Others see it more in terms of uniformity of thought, never having disagreements. These are both very superficial definitions of "unity" in NA. This tradition means "all of us being here for the same reason, recovery from addiction". It means, as a fellowship, surrendering to the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions. It means loving all addicts, even the ones I do not like. It means submitting to group conscience when it is truly a

conscience. It means all of us staying focused on our primary purpose. It means that I can walk into an NA meeting anywhere and find an instant family. This tradition means consistency in NA. It ensures that an atmosphere of recovery is available anywhere in the world. Unity for me is being part of a greater whole. It is subjecting my personal wants to the group's needs.

Our common welfare is recovery from the disease of addiction. It is being able to go to a meeting and find that atmosphere of recovery so necessary to staying clean. Unity as expressed in this tradition means the empathy, unconditional love and immediate acceptance that draws the newcomers into NA and fuels recovery for the members who've been here. The NAWOL says it all when it says, "It is of the utmost importance that the groups maintain an atmosphere of recovery. We need to be committed to the program that saved our life and further helps us to live clean productive lives. It is most imperative that the newcomers see this. We all need to remember that we are all the same and common welfare should come first."

Personal welfare in NA is recovery. I personally feel that my personal welfare doesn't need to be put before our common welfare or visa-versa. When I surrendered to NA I could see that they were really the same. The principles that I must surrender to before I can put our common