

*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**



**VOLUME 41**

**June - July 2021**



The New/Old NA WAY Magazine

Volume 41

June - July 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

### 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

### FELLOWSHIP LITERATURE CONFERENCE

Date: 18th thru 21st November 2021  
Findlay Ohio

### 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: [AntigenFriaNA@gmail.com](mailto:AntigenFriaNA@gmail.com)  
[www.nahelp.ru](http://www.nahelp.ru)

Russia

# 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**

## Recovery is an Active Change

Recovery is an active change in our ideas and attitudes, never allowed good enough to rob you of the benefits in which the NA way of life can bring you and your loved ones. We arrived at the doors of narcotics anonymous, afraid, lost, and in that state of humiliation in despair, where hopelessness was a way of life. We walked our journey blinded by the darkness of our disease and our fears. Addiction is a three-fold disease that affects us physically, mentally, and spiritually. With a strong desire to change from what was to what we can become is possible, but we must be willing to have that active change of our ideals and attitudes.

With acceptance and surrender as our pathway, we lay down our old principles and let go of our reservations. We pick up our 12 steps and traditions, letting go of our pride we seek sponsorship and begin to work on incorporating them into our life. Awareness plus Acceptance equals no change without Action the prospect of staying clean and enjoying the benefits of our program is without a doubt in question. Recovery does not give us immunity from life issues and those times of troubles, yet we can see and feel the impact of our principles, by how we react to them.

Hard times are sometimes blessings in disguise. We will all experience life issues, trials are inevitable,

perhaps we will be faced with issues that just seem to be impossible for us to handle. Perhaps we will undergo setbacks at times but in the end, it is these times that make us stronger, better, wiser and we get the opportunity to believe in that in which we cannot see, but yet we experience it every day. These times will help us to grow, as our courage and inner strength continue to move us forward on the path that has been lit by those that have walked it before us. No matter what life brings our way we can come to appreciate what living the NA way of life has done for us. For today with a belief in this program, and sponsorship we now have found the courage to face life, not on its terms but with our newly adopted principles.

Never let fear or life's challenges ever overtake your determination to succeed and giving us what we are worthy of, for recovery is waiting for us. No longer are we less than anyone, nor better than, but we are equals to all, that travel this journey call life. Stay strong always moving forward, remembering that you are always stronger than what you ever believed, as you are walking in and with the light today. Yes, with our new attitude and ideals, we now know that we are lovable, worthy, and deserving of all of the treasures that recovery has brought us, and all of them that continue to await our arrival, as more will be revealed to you, that is if you do not settle for good enough.

### FELLOWSHIP LITERATURE CONFERENCE

November 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. (Bring Sheets, Pillows, Blankets, Towels and Soap everything else provided)

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

Send check to: A.S.I.S. For NA P.O. Box 4404 Allentown, Pa 18105

{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 November 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

Just for today, our greatest weakness lies in giving up. No journey is impossible for us to travel. For we know and are witness to the miracle in which has been part of our story and the transformation of what was is now the miracle in which we get to live in. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time and never give up. For this, I know that the light of life and recovery is awaiting your arrival.... Smile Love and hugs

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

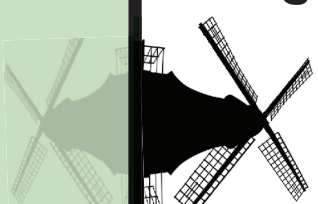
## **Staying on the Recovery Train**

Stay on the train, the recovery train. I have read this more than once and it reminds me of my supervisor from 5 years ago. The last time I was told to stay on the train or get off it was when I was in the principal's office because I was fighting with my supervisor and because I was fighting with myself. I was often not there, and I called in sick because use was high on my priorities and they could not count on me, they would rather lose me than have me. I was of no use to them because when I worked it was always some kind of drama show and it was all about how I was doing. It was not all about that, but I was certainly looking forward to that. I was full of use and felt like it was all just happening to me and that the

world was against me and that I only had myself to rely on. I desperately wanted to figure out a way to deal with life, but I was ignorant of what was with me and all I could do was get off the train and see that I was of no value to myself, to others and to society as a whole. It hurts to have to get off the train when you have not paid again but somewhere there is a choice whether I do it my way and do not pay or whether I do it another way and just pay properly was what costs what is mine. So, to stay on a train I have to give what is mine, my positivity, my energy, my commitment, my motivation, my work. Now we are 5 years further and have come to the conclusion that I am sick, I am an addict. A deadly disease that is with me forever. If you had told me 5 years ago that the life of an addict is better than mine at that time, I would have called you crazy, but I can now say that my life has never been of this quality. I have people around me who do not use, this is already something I never thought possible but is really back in my life. These people and the NA program can also help me to enjoy life and accept it as it is. I can do things I never could before like being on time and present for a year without it's all about me. I no longer have to borrow money and can buy my own food and transfer my bills without someone else having to do it for me like my dad. This is all because I no longer use today and may find a new way of living. I do say I can,

## **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

# 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.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 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. \_\_\_\_\_

but I can't. I can only try to do what I see in others like my sponsor or other people in the program and it works. There is nothing in me that could have come up with this let alone the path to it, all I can say is that I am extremely happy that today I have people in NA that want and can help me learn to live and enjoy life. All that is required is my will to want to recover and the actions that follow. If I want to stay on the train of recovery then it is important to pay for my ticket, so I don't suddenly have to get off at a strange station somewhere and stand still, it is going to cost me something of real value. Keeping appointments, helping someone, being honest by

showing my real face and willingness to be open to suggestions which are not my own. I have been offered paid work this week for the second time. People know I am an addict and they still believe in me and want me to come work for them. I do not know at all where that train of recovery is taking me but at least the train is going somewhere where things are possible which I do not even know are possible. Thanks for the suggestion of writing this it kept me out of my own head and thanks for taking the time to read my post.

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



## Learning How to Love

I remember when all I had to do is worry about myself. What I was going to eat for breakfast, what I was going to wear, what I was going to do for my day.

When I got together with my significant other, I eventually met her son. He was almost three years old. He did not talk much until he met me and then he had a mouth full of words.

We went to the Boardwalk, ran around, rode some rides and went on the beach. We built sandcastles and got really dirty.

The next day we went to the park or something. I instantly started showing up for the both of them. Overtime we became closer. His father on the other hand had become more distant over time. As the years went on his Father would disappear and then reappear. At the beginning of the year his father was saying he's going to call every day and by the end of the summer he wanted nothing to do with him. I felt it when I read the text where he was asking about how to terminate his rights. One of the last things I told him was either step up or step down, there has to be consistency; and it's not even about the money because God will always provide.

When I was a child my father did not know how to be a Dad. He chose to drink in isolation than to be with his sons. He never did much for us besides pay the bills and keep a roof

over our heads. He never showed up, all he did was sit in his shed and drink. He was physically, emotionally, mentally, and verbally abusive to all of us.

When I was sixteen, I left my Mom's house after she got divorced and got emancipated. I found father figures in the wrong places, or some would call this a "big homie".

This guy taught me how to run the streets, how to be feared by others, and how to make money illegally. Everyone around me was doing it so it seemed ok.

The strangest part about it was I was in a mostly all black gang and I was the only white kid at the time. I always felt like I had to prove to them differently on who I was, when little did, I know I didn't know who I really was.

My Father was a racist and sometimes I wonder if I was just trying to stick it to him by living the way I did.

I felt safe in those places, but most of the time I was just afraid of reality.

When I was 18, I caught my first charge ever. I had assaulted my older brother with a deadly weapon one night a week after taking care of something for him that involved similar things. I blacked out and took all of my anger out on him. I remember seeing my Father's face right before I struck him. Shortly later the police were in my house and handcuffing me. The state wanted to give me a sentence longer than I had been alive, and I was completely ok with it.



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



## 16<sup>th</sup> 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 – [matrixmatclub@yahoo.com](mailto:matrixmatclub@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)

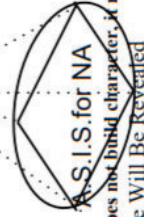
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ E – Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Check No. \_\_\_\_\_ Amount **\$105.00**

**Send Check by June 6, 2021**



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

I did not know what life had in store for me and at that point in time it was scarier than to serve a long sentence in prison.

The day came and I saw the judge, he told me that this would have to go to trial, and he let me go until then. I went home and immediately returned to using.

A week before the court date my brother showed up at my door and asked me if I was prepared for court. I told him yeah, I'm prepared to take the ride and that I would hopefully get out in about ten years. He told me that he was going to represent me. I did not know what he was going to say but at that point I did not really care.

He came and picked me up the day of court, he had a nice suit for me to wear and we drove over there. He told the judge all of the things he did when we were kids, how he would hurt me, and he deserved everything that had happened. He asked them to not press charges. They ended up dropping the case after the judge argued with the state about it for a few minutes. A year later I did it again and there he was, he helped me once again to get off of those charges.

Unconditional love is what I saw when he did this. He forgave me and never gave up on me. He allowed me not a second chance but believed in me and I was able to carry out my life.

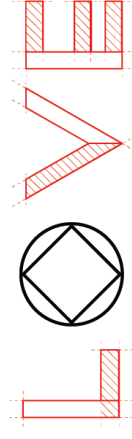
Today, we have three children. Our oldest's father is still not speaking to him and he's been very emotional

about it.

He asks me from time to time throughout the weeks why his Dad doesn't want to be a Dad. I believe it's fear. Fear of the unknown and fear of failing.

The only failure is not showing up and being there. I've learned a lot of mistakes. I have learned that I am not my father and I don't have to act out like him. I've learned to show up for my family and be there for them when they most need me. I've learned that I am not perfect, and I don't have to be too hard on myself or others. I get to share many pleasurable moments throughout the day today with all of them. Waking up and making breakfasts with smiley faces on the pancakes and stuff is a blessing. I could not be this person I am today without NA, and the members who taught me how to be myself. I do not have to live in fear, nor do I have to be the person who I thought I was. We learn how to show up when God needs us to, and we learn that with faith we can live our lives with serenity.

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



## A Prayer from Russia

GOD,

*I do not know who you are,*

*I do not know what you are,*

*I do not know your plans.*

*But please show me Your will,*

*whatever it may be.*

*Grant me the strength to*

*accept it and fulfill it.*

*Fill my heart with Love*

*and Compassion.*

*Let me be the doer of Your will.*

*Let me Love and Serve others.*

**Written: By an Anonymous Addict From: Russia**



Starting Balance

\$5680.09  
+\$1,753.89  
= \$7434.79

in Balance for Book purchase  
9/25/2020

Paid out

\$ 6,519.18  
\$30.00  
\$ 400.06

09/29/2020 Transfer Wise Payment for Books  
09/29/2020 Transfer Wise Fee for Transfer  
11/20/2020 Custom Fee

Total in Book Account 485.55

12/01/2021m

Books Baby Blues in stock starting

1200 Baby Blues in Stock

Received Baby Blues

4000

Total in Stock

5200 as of as of 1/01/2021

Sold Baby Blues

1000

Total in Stock 4/01/2021

4100

Grey Books In stock

2500

Received

1000

Total in Stock 1/01/2021

3500

Sold Grey Books

800

Total In stock

2700

Total in Book Account

Total in Book Account 485.55 12/01/2020m

Starting in account

\$485.55

Received

\$900.00

Baby Blues

\$900.00

Received

\$1520.00

Grey Books

\$1520.00

Total 4/01/2021

In Book account

\$2905.55

## Update on Book Stockpile April 2021

Historical Perspective Group  
Last update before the virus.  
We had a Total of - 4250 Baby Blues in Stock  
Since than we sold -3050 Baby Blues  
We have -- 1200 Baby Blues in Stock as of 7/30/2020  
Grey Books - We had 3244 in Stock  
Grey Books Sold 744  
Grey Books left in Stock - 2500  
We bought in +\$2745 Dollars in Baby Blue  
Grey Books bought in +\$1413.60  
Total beginning Balance  
\$1,521.49  
Ending balance  
\$5254.51 with the Credit of +\$415.58 owed from Printing company  
= \$5680.09 in Balance for Book purchase

**In Service Historical Perspective Group**  
**Contact for Book Information [Matrixmatchclub@ayhoo.com](mailto:Matrixmatchclub@ayhoo.com)**

09/25 ACH IAT CREDIT, Netherlands TRNWISE 1,753.89 to our account for books

Transfers for Books Paid to Book company  
09/29 WIRE TRANSFER OUTGOING, TransferWise Inc 6,519.18  
09/29 WIRE TRANSFER FEE 30.00  
Subtotal: 6,549.18

11/20 DEBIT CARD PURCHASE, AUT 11 VISA DDA PUR  
PAYPAL AXPINTL 402 935 7733 \* CA  
4085404024191110  
\$ 404.68 for customs fees

## Patience and God's Love

My story began in the Soviet Union. I grew up in a simple working-class family. At that time, everyone lived the same way. We were neither rich nor poor. My father and mother instilled in me a love of reading from an early age, I do not know if it was good or bad. Although I'll be honest, sometimes I think it would be better if they didn't. Despite my father was a Communist, he respected religion, and we had religious literature at home. I read the children's Bible at the age of 6-7. I did not understand much. But I remember one thing - you cannot be bad. Otherwise, I will be punished. I also read a lot of fiction and justice prevailed everywhere. But the reality was the exact opposite. I tried to be good, I did well in elementary school, I was an obedient boy. At the same time, I was constantly bullied, teased by other guys, sometimes I fought, trying to punish the offenders, sometimes I was beaten, I was angry, offended. My parents could not pay enough attention to me, as they were constantly working at the factory, at that time everyone was working. My father drank and was sometimes strict with me. In our family, it was not customary to show your feelings. I grew up as a serious boy, and I still have a gloomy expression on my face, like a mask. I tried to find answers in books, I literally lived in them. But I did not find it.

I myself did not really know how crippled I was inside, for many years living in my shell, afraid of everything around me, I was angry, envious, offended and offended others. Most of all, I blamed and pitied myself. I found comfort in drugs. When I tried drugs for the first time, I calmed down, I felt warm and good, it was like the Love, which was spoken about by priests and monks of different Religions. I tried to be a part of these religions, but no matter what faith I converted to, without drugs, the pain would not subside. I figured out it was a curse, maybe karma or punishment. I simply submitted to the disease and became its slave. I did not see a way out; I didn't know there was a way out. It was as if I was burned out from the inside, I became indifferent to myself, to others, only one thought haunted me: "can I get another dose?"

I remember my ex-wife, who was not an addict, filed for divorce after 10 years of marriage, and we had to go to sign the papers. She came to me, I remember her look, a combination of disappointment, grief, and just a little bit of hope... That day, I felt myself like shit and I did not care about that look, although deep down, I knew that I could stop her, that all was not lost... I needed to use, so I told her, let us go to one place and then we'll go. She went with me, I went to the dealer, but he did not open the door for me, but just threw me a syringe with a drug from the balcony and I

just went into the nearest bushes and hit myself in front of my wife. So, I put a fat cross on our relationship.

Then came the long years of isolation, mental institutions, endless detoxes, the prison, the self-flagellation, the glimmers of hope, and then using again. Until the next detox, a girl came up to me and told me about the program, she had cancer, but she looked happy. I was hooked on something and I decided to go to rehab. Then I got to my first N.A. meeting, this group became my home group, and for about two years I served there. And now that I have moved to another town, I always try to be helpful if necessary.

N.A. showed me the way to recovery. The First and Second Steps helped me to realize how strong the Love of God is, otherwise, I would hardly have written all this, so in the Third Step I decided to trust in His Love. Today I have a new family, my fourth child (a boy) was born during the pandemic. There was a difficult birth, I had to leave my job to help my wife, it was difficult, there was a lack of money, argues, resentments, guilt - long story short: everything as we addicts like lol! But there were a lot of good things too, I saw my son growing up 24/7, it's an indescribable emotion, something Divine. When I look at him, look into his eyes, I can feel the presence of God right on my skin. I often think that God arranged all this on purpose, so that I would not relapse. It is true that in these

7 months, I never had thought to go and use. And this is the merit of God and N.A., I do not know what would have happened without the program... Now, watching my son learning to sit down and get up on his feet, I sometimes want to cry with joy and gratitude. I realize that I'm on the right track, that I did everything right. And job... Yes, I recently started looking for a new one, it's not as easy as I thought. But for today, I am convinced that God will not leave me, I just need to be patient and continue the program.

March 2021

**Written: By Anonymous  
Addict From: Russia, Moscow**

## **What Happens When Long Term Membership Becomes Apathic**

What happens when long term membership becomes apathic. What are its effects within the fellowship?

It seems you hear from newcomers their excuses for not getting involved is that they have no experience, and they say where are the people with long term clean time and they are right. Where are the ones who were our trailblazers were have, they gone? Were they have gone is they started to live a life outside of N.A.? You will hear that they gave all they got and now it's your turn. They stop going to as many of meeting

---

## **Life is movement.**

Everything moves in perfection, from a grain of sand to the infinite universe. From atoms to planets and galaxies. The bird passing through the sky. The ever-changing surface of the water. In everything that grows towards the light. Life moves through the laughter of the children, in the tears of the elderly, and in the silence of awareness. Sometimes it moves quickly like lightning and thunder, sometimes slowly within the stone whispering secrets of the past.

When we rest in stillness, when we are awake to life's subtle moments, then we can experience the perfect brilliance of life. Life never takes. Life is giving. It shares of its wisdom, intelligence, and beingness.

I slow down and breathe in life, while I dance to the heartbeat of the Source. Life is said to be a journey, but the end destination is already here, within every moment, within every breath.

Life is now.

**Written: By an Anonymous Addict From: Sweden**



## **Black + White**

When I got clean, things were black or white, with a very thin line of grey where, the two met. I think in the beginning it had to be that simple.... Black, white, yes-no, night-day. During my using career there were so many relationships and attitudes that were based or ended with no real defined end or conclusion, especially when my mind was foggy from the drugged state of mind, I was in.

Aa I stayed off if all drugs, my mind was still in bad shape.... I got a sponsor and we started working steps. The thin grey line started to encroach on the white and black with a clear head and a slightly different attitude. The longer I stayed and did the work, the larger the grey area became, a whole new world opened up - one of unlimited possibilities to be free from old attitudes. The basis for this transformation is based, I firmly believe, in the honesty, open mindedness, and willingness to personal change through working the 12 steps and applying traditions to my life - spiritual principles don't hurt unless I'm holding onto my past ways of living.

It all begins with being completely abstinent from all mind- and mood-altering narcotics and sedations (drugs). Then it becomes an inside job to have a life transformed by the program. Old attitudes fade away and before we know it, we are living a

whole new lifestyle as a result of the 12 steps and 12 traditions.

Today, my life is grey with a thin right border and a thin left border - one is black, and one is grey. I never would have expected this when I got clean.

Now that does not mean we compromise the program of narcotics anonymous to fit everyone with many different ills to fit in! Because of complete abstinence and 12 steps and 12 traditions we get to live a new way of life - if anyone wants this gift, do what the program tells you to do. It's really simple.

Leave everything else at the door before you come in the rooms that mat separate you from the fellowship. There is no right or wrong religion or political party or lifestyle or economic status that matters here, you are just like us... If you want to get better, do what we do - stay abstinent and with the steps, all of them, in order to the best of your ability.

Cooking dinner and getting prepared for tomorrow's multi-day snowstorm.

Love and respect

**Posted By: An Anonymous Member From: Delco PA, USA**

as they had earlier in recovery. They are not as committed to carry our message. Apathy has set in. They cannot even see it; life seems to be going well. They have gotten a life, a new car, a new house, a great job, and they even are accepted by their family again. They start to drift away from the meetings. They tell you that they are new responsibilities', and we would not understand. That you will understand when you get there. Soon you do not see them any more they start to show up for their clean time once a year to tell you how great their lives are.

What happens to the Fellowship is there is a void left were these members once filled. The example of long-term recovery is gone. Newcomers struggle without these examples and there seems to relapse more than ever around us. Newcomers wonder if this program works. We lose the spirit we once felt in the rooms. Apathy kills and it is like a plague that we cannot see.

How do we avoid it is with a daily program a check list of where we are at in recovery? Have we stopped doing some of the things we have done to get recovery like Prayer, reading, writing, making phone calls, going to meeting and repeating the reading, writing and prayer in our lives. Are we holding resentments towards other? Are we starting to compare our inner to outside appearances? These are sign of relapse. It all can be stopped in its tracks by

being honest with oneself and are sponsor and God. Our sponsor can help us with their experience how they have overcome apathy in their recovery and what they had to do to get out of it from there experience.

Involvement in the fellowship and doing service can overcome apathy from ever setting in. It cannot just be what it was like in the old days. It is teaching that them the old days can be our future. Excitement will overcome apathy. Seeing the face of a newcomer get that first smile when the believe that they can stay clean are gifts of recovery. When they chair their first meeting, when they hang their first P-I poster when they give another newcomer there first hug. Watch them get over their fear when they are first ask to speak are sponsor another addict'. When they start a meeting and watch it grow. These are all gifts that help me stay out of apathy. So be my ears and eyes be my conscience if you see me entering the word of apathy.

**Written by An Anonymous Addict From: PA, USA**



## **There is no Time to be Negative When We Count Our Blessings.**

We hear a lot about gratefulness in Narcotics Anonymous. Perhaps your sponsor gave you the assignment to write a daily gratefulness list and count your blessings. I know I was given that assignment and can struggle with that part now and then. It does make sense that when we came in N.A. we were not grateful at all. expertly when you think about it, many did not appreciate life at all, that was one of the reasons we used drugs. To avoid life.

Life was like a maze with lots of scary animals in every corner. Take one wrong turn and one of these animals would rip you to shreds. That is why we stopped moving forward at one point in life. But the thing is that all of those animals are scared of light, and if your inner light shines, no animal can hurt you. When your inner light shines you can hear "The Voice". And that voice will guide you through the maze. But what can you do when you are the one who turned off the light, and you are so confused that you do not know that you are the one who did it?

Narcotics Anonymous has the power to give us tools. Tools that we can use to rebuild our inner light. And that on its own is something we should be grateful for. By learning to shine as a sun and walk the path

of light we gain a life we have never had before. A life we will never want to avoid anymore. We will not have to be alone anymore.

NEVER ALONE, NEVER AGAIN!!

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

## **One Addict Journey**

I sit in my truck smoking a cigar tonight after a frustrating evening on eBay... Looks like I need a new keyboard that works instead of the one I have had forever that does not work well, at least when I try to type words. At least my pc at home is working well so far. There is a whole story behind that... I may get to it. I may not.

29 years ago, tonight was the last time I used a drug, a can of Coors, probably Coors Light, but I do not really remember anymore. It was a 12 ounce can, and I hated Coors and it was the only thing around and it was free. And it did not take the pain of living away and it turned on me the next day.

It told me that life was not worth living anymore. I remember the night of January 25, 1992. And I remember January 26, 1992. I have never had to feel that bad, that insane, that desperate since. I remember those two days. I was told to never forget them!

I remember wanting to commit

to be able to see that glimpse of hope, and start to practice positivity In N.A. that is possible. Due to extensive experience of older members, and the power of empathy, we hear our story coming from someone else.

For the first time in our lives, we are being acknowledged, and finally our walls can begin to crumble.

Our walls of pain, loneliness, and negativity, crumble, and slowly we become human again.

We go to meetings daily, we start to listen, and slowly we change from loners to lovers.

We have a disease that wants us to feel miserable; useless, and lonely, but now we have a higher power that wants us to feel worthwhile, useful, and part of.

we need to tap into the positive source of strength, and practice positivity just for today.

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



of wrestling with a vague sense of hopelessness, try to figure out where it is coming from—because our problem isn't hopeless. The real problem is what is causing our hopelessness. It is only with Honesty, Open-mindedness, and willingness we can surrender and find the help we need then we discover eight common causes of hopelessness. Take a look and see if any of these root issues feel familiar.

We feel like we are in over our head, we have bought into the lie once an addict always an addict this will lead us to Jail, Institutions, and Death

We have not hit our bottom.

We feel out of control and powerless and cannot see no hope

We feel overwhelmed our lives are unmanageable and do not know how to stop

We feel rejected like everyone has given up hope on us

We feel remorse and regret

We feel crushing fear.

We feel trapped. Like we were imprisoned on the earth and the gates were locked shut we cried out for Someone to Please stop the world we wanted to get off.

When we started talking to our sponsor, fellow member, and God about our hopelessness, we began to heal. We were given the tools to

recovery and a fellowship of other addicts to walk our journey with us. “When our lives were slipping away, we began living the NA way of life we found out more about our sense of hopelessness through prayer and meditation. We found the God of hope, by learning a new way of life as we learned the spiritual principles of the 12 steps, and through learning how to live the NA way we find the chains that had bound us are now broken.

**In This Moment:** We who were once hopeless and have now found hope in the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous.

**Written: By an Anonymous Addict From: North Carolina, USA**

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## Positivity

What does it mean? If you look it up it is described as “the practice of being or tendency to be positive or optimistic in attitude.”

In that description the word “practise”, and “attitude” appeals to me.

When we come in N.A. Positivity, and optimism is the last thing we believe in. Being broken spiritual, emotional, and physical, we just want the pain to end.

All that talk about Steps, Higher Power, and all other N.A. jargon, cannot reach us yet. We need hope. just a tiny bit of it is needed.

suicide. On January 26, 1992, and not being able to figure it how to do it and do it right. There would be no phone call. There would be note. I would just do it and be out of pain. The world would go on without me and be simply fine, and I would not have to face life anymore.

So here I sit, smoking a cigar and listening to a hockey game in the cab of my truck all bundled up to stay warm. And I am not near that computer keyboard that does not work right. F--k that keyboard. LOL! F--k it good as it wastes my time trying to get things done online at home. I will take care of that tomorrow.

So, I had to make an amend with my boss this weekend. I did an inventory, talked to my sponsor and got my opinions and feelings out if the way of progress and made the amend and

will only use the work computer for work related stuff.

Anyway, making the amend felt good. Look, I work for a guy who is a whole lot easier to work for when both of us are making a very good living instead of making just-getting-by-money.

This weekend I felt a bit sad and lonely. I did not feel alone; there is a difference between feeling alone and feeling lonely! So, I took care of me and had a restful weekend after getting my home computer up and running for my eBay posting to get “stuff” sold and out of the house.

I am just glad that I did not think about taking the keyboard and throwing it out of the second-floor window! That is change! LOL. I will search for a new one tomorrow. A basic, wired, cheap one. Keep it simple and



uncomplicated.

The steps continue to change my life. I guess that is what I am attempting to put into words tonight. Give me the steps, a dictionary, honesty, open mindedness, willingness and some hope from shared experience from recovering and recovered drug addicts, and I can continue to get better and have an ongoing improved life, not a maintained life!

I want to get better - that is willingness. I want to take a look at the things that hold me back - that is honesty. I want to change - that is open mindedness. I have no experience with where I am going - I need the hope from experienced members through the 12 steps. - Nothing else works for me until the pain gets bad enough. It does not take a whole lot of pain and un-comfortability in my life to get my attention these days that I need to surrender once again to the freedom provided in the steps.

The disease of addiction wants to have me miserable and denying that there is a simple solution. Surrender the problem by turning it over to god's care, inventory what is going on in my head - attitudes, feelings, lack of action and then make a gratitude list. Meditate to clear my mind so no thoughts are present. Then take some type of new action.

And share that with my sponsor and y'all.

Well, it is now January 26, 2021, and I made it to XXIX. I did not do this by myself - it is a collective cele-

bration that marks my time off drugs and doing my best to "live this way", a new way of life.

Thank you for being a part of my journey on my path for the last 29 years, whether you have known me for decades or years, or if we have just met. You can walk along my way with me and find your way and continue the journey.

I am grateful for this new life and have many friends who have never seen me high. Most of the people who knew me when I was getting high are either gone from my life or are dead. Love and respect

**Written: By an Anonymous Addict From: Delco, PA USA**

## **Reaction/Action**

Ever since I arrived in Narcotics Anonymous sharing in meetings has been a struggle for me. I remember a time when I could hardly get through one of the readings at the beginning of a meeting without my voice shaking, getting out of breath, and feeling completely embarrassed. Even though it was difficult for me I was able to consistently read the readings at nearly every meeting but actually sharing was another thing all together. I was frozen with fear and anytime that I was called on to share or I was in a meeting where they did pass the can, it felt like a disaster as soon as I opened my mouth.

how to live either. I did not know a lot and I only chased my addiction, my urge to satisfy myself with a quick fix. I did not look at anything anymore. It stopped bothering me. It cost me a lot and also caused damage to others. I know more or less where it started and how it got worse. But that does not matter anymore.

Because of the despair I was fortunately able to make an acknowledgement that I am an addict and I got to know NA. Now I know where I feel at home and safe, where I can find myself again. Where I have found the connection with myself, God, and others again. I am only just on my way with this journey, and it has already brought me so much. I feel human again. It seems as if I have always wanted NA in my life. The intense feeling of connection with each other and a loving god in the middle.

With my homergroup, doing service and working on the program with my sponsor and the tools we are allowed to use, with each other, I have found a way to deal with life. I learn about myself and life every day. This is how the journey continues, as long as I do the actions. Depends on how much I put in, because that is also how much I get in return. It does not come for nothing. And that includes the fact that it sometimes goes a bit less. Then sometimes it is important that I hear the solution. I know this better and better now.

That is one of the reasons why I have faith in God, the program, and

the people in NA. I need others that I was never open to and simply was not used to. I never learned it that way.

Getting clean is not what I have to deal with anymore. That is a gift. Staying clean and recovering from disease addiction is what I am allowed to work on. I get more and more choices and freedom. I become less of a victim. I experience more peace and quiet nowadays and I can deal with life better than ever before. This is how I feel that the program works.

I can be there for others again and that is where I can get fulfillment. My life now consists more than out of myself. I feel more and more willing to share this way with others and recover together, in the NA way of life. A hopeful clean life.

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

## **Identifying the Causes of Hopelessness**

"When our life was slipping away, we found help in the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous which led us to the 12 steps and God. When we are experiencing hopelessness one of the most important steps you can take is to identify the cause; it is only when we come to the point of admitting we have a disease and we are addicts, not failures. In other words, instead



embedded deep within our spirit, but remember you are never alone. We travel this journey with our sponsor and our faith has grown, no longer control by neither the drugs nor our emotions, we are driven forward by that in which we cannot see but we get to experience it through its awesome powers. Through living our principles, we are being set free and living in hope of that in which once seemed impossible. Yes, we may be broken, and our shortcomings may cause us discomfort but remember we are in the process of healing.

Everyone is broken and scared of something, not just you, believe in that in which you cannot see for this I know that our principles will change our lives in ways in which I would have never believed possible. My sponsor often told me never to quit moving forward for the miracle of recovery is awaiting my arrival. He shared that I would find that I am truly lovable, worthy, and deserving of all of the treasures that recovery has brought me and all of those that continue to await my arrival and that more will be revealed as my spirit matures. My inner vision of myself has changed through my willingness to explore and discover that authentic self here in recovery. No longer, am I that person that walks this journey blinded by spiritual issues, but I embrace all my gifts. I do not have unrealistic expectations of who I am, as I often fall short along the way. With acceptance and surrender as

the cornerstone of my journey, along with the application of our principles I have found that source of peace. To retain and maintain this peace I must continue seeking that in which is awaiting me for today my story continues to seek solutions to that which continues to affect me.

Just for today, be strong in what is healthy for you, be confident as you move forward, always remember not to let people come into your life that would poison your spirit. You are never less than, not better than for we are all on this journey we call life. Remember that people-pleasing is the ultimate form of rejection of oneself, we are not responsible for the happiness of others or their issues in which they may find themselves. Take time to embrace yourself and the beauty in which you bring into this journey. Be patient and know that self-love, self-respect, self-forgiveness, and self-acceptance are possible for those that have the willingness to explore and discover it. Remember that good enough often becomes the enemy of that which still awaits you.

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

## **A Hopeful Clean Life With NA**

In the beginning I did not know I was an addict. I certainly did not know what recovery was. I did not know

I remember being so embarrassed that I could not manage to form an entire thought like most people could. The suggestions that people gave me at the time did not seem to help at all and I would always retreat back into my shell. I felt like I needed to get more experience and work through the steps in order to have the confidence to share. That was partially true, but I needed to be sharing right from the start.

I remember when I had around one year clean, I still felt the same about sharing as I did in the beginning because I had not been doing it regularly. I felt desperate about this and reached out to members for suggestions. I remember someone suggested to me that I do a reading and share at every meeting I went to. There was nothing magical about this suggestion, but it finally hit me that the only way to grow in this area was to face it and work through it. Around that time, I started getting into the history of Narcotics Anonymous and the Gray Book. Me and a few other addicts started a new Group and held closed NA meetings where we studied the older literature. It was in these meetings where I was able to put the suggestion that I got into practice. I decided that I had to share at every meeting no matter how I was feeling. Somewhere along the way I had an awakening about total abstinence the way that it is described in our literature and I could relate to it. I had my fair share of experiences

with different medications and how those things prevented me from surrendering to the program. I finally had something to share about but it also put me in direct conflict with my character defects and how I related to others. I could not deny the truth that I found from the literature and my own experience, but this was not accepted by too many people around me. People began to get angry and say that I should not share those things because it could kill someone. I never wanted to hurt anyone, I wanted to share the truth about my addiction and hopefully others would not have to make the same mistakes I did.

I followed through with my commitment to share at every meeting and a couple of months ago I was asked to be a speaker. It is amazing the growth that I experienced in a short amount of time by getting into action. I have only been to a handful of open meetings in the last year but last week I was invited to go to one by a friend, so I decided to go. This ended up being a very rough experience for me because the hole meeting seemed to be about drug replacement, psychiatry, and all sorts of other outside issues. I didn't feel like I was in an NA meeting. I'm used to being in meetings where we talk about recovery in NA as our solution to the disease of addiction, not things outside NA. I felt angry because I felt like it was my duty to share a clear NA message, but I was wanting to react to what

everyone else was sharing. I did not feel like I could manage to share spiritually so I decided not to. When the meeting was over, and I reflected on the situation that night and the next day I felt guilty for not sharing. It had been so long since I felt like that but after remembering something a friend told me I felt better about it. He said that when he was new, he had a hard time sharing because he was always trying to react. I could relate to that so much. Most of the time, when I hear people share things that I don't think are in line with this program in a meeting I'm planning what I'm going to share to correct the misinformation they shared. When I get into this self-obsession it seems that nothing that comes out of my mouth ends up being helpful. I asked him how to not react and he said to just listen and if need be to just sit on my hands.

I think in this situation it was best that I just sat on my hands. It's not my job to correct everyone or to try to tell other Groups how to conduct their meetings. I can carry the message at my Home Group. Since this experience I have been reflecting on a lot of other situations that have happened over the last few months where I have reacted when I should have just sat on my hands. I have created a lot of unmanageability in my life by trying to be right or not just allowing others to be wrong. If I perceive someone as being difficult or if I feel poked or pressured, I react at the drop of a hat and after the dust settles, I try

to smooth things over and justify my reaction. Since I've started becoming aware of this, I have realized that I am powerless over the actions of others, but I need to keep my side of the street clean. There have been plenty of times that I have wanted to react to posts on RFNA, social media, texts or what people share in meetings, but I do not want to deal with the results of reacting to those things today. I have been able to just let things be a little bit without making situations worse and that's something that I've never really been able to do before.

I have always heard that I am powerless over other people, but I never really was aware of how I often I was wanting to react to things and how much I wanted to control others. There have been so many times that I have reacted automatically and did not feel like I had much control over it. I always thought that I was right, and the world was wrong. I was not totally aware until recently that this was a part of my disease and that without taking action, I would continue this behavior over and over. So, if I cannot control wanting to react what can I do? I can plug the situations that I react to into my step work. I have found that these are exactly the things that I need to be writing about. I can ask myself what it about these things is what wants me want to react. I have also found it helpful to only talk to my sponsor when someone offends me, so it is not repeated and creates more wreckage. I have

ment, depression, self-righteousness, pride, paranoia, distrust, etc. This are all reactions we have to protect ourselves from facing what is really going on. When we start acting out of these attitudes our live can get quite unmanageable.

The side effect of shielding our pain is that it also rejects healing. In some way we hold on to the past this way continuing what we are actually are trying to get away from. We need to open ourselves up to be helped. This is hard if we do not take the time to reflect on what a situation brings up inside of us and how it makes us feel, think, and act. There is nothing wrong with these reactions because it is what has helped us in the past. But we do not need to hold on to them anymore. We are surrounded by people that can best understand and help us. We need to take a leap of faith and start opening up to them and let them help us. Often these people know how we are doing better than we are, because they can look at us in a way, we cannot look ourselves. They are not emotionally involved in it and can look at the situation from a distance.

Often these are the patterns in our live that can bring us back to using without us even knowing it. So, when someone points something out to us, we better take a look at it, this is how we are helped in NA. From the past we are growing together into a new future, where we no longer need to live in the pain we have known. This is

freedom new to us. Where no longer have to be insane and can come to believe that a new way of living is possible for us.

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

## **Remember That We All Need Personal Time**

Remember that we all need personal time in which we get to relax and to allow ourselves to be just us. We were not given freedom just to allow ourselves to be controlled by people, places, or things. The NA way of life and our spiritual principles have given us a way out of the darkness and pain of addiction. We have a disease in which our physical, mental, and spiritual self, has been dominated by the destructive force that affected our loved ones and ourselves. We will need to seek spiritual solutions and support from our sponsor and fellow members as we undergo this transformation.

We have been given a set of principles, simple ones in which we can incorporate into our day-to-day affairs. This program is not just about working the principles, but it is about living them, not only when things are, as we would have them, but also in those hard times when life just seems so unfair. Often times we have to do those things that bring us face to face with that deep-rooted fear that is

come up and till this day I don't seem to get too close to my parents on those emotional levels.

I always say, if we do not have expectations we cannot get let down. When I got in the relationship, I am in today she had a little boy. He seemed as if life played him the same hand, his Mother is a loving mother, and his father neglects him or acts as if he doesn't exist. Our first Christmas I ended up working overtime to prepare for our twins to be born in March and to make sure our oldest had everything he could imagine. Most importantly we show up for him on a regular basis. My gratitude speaks when I show up, it's an action word.

This year has been different, my older brother Buddy passed, away recently. We had the chance to show up to his Mother's house. The house was quiet; I got so used to him running up and down the stairs or hearing him laughing upstairs. It was just dead silence. Giles street was just empty, it seemed like the whole neighborhood just did not have any light on it. My other older brother made his way to Tennessee a few months ago and he was not around. My Father is down in Florida for the winter, and we have not really talked in a while. He made a thoughtless attempt to send a gift by asking my younger brother to go spend a few dollars for a toy for the kids. His only Grand kids and he does not seem interested in having a relationship with them. Recently one

of my best friends Dale S passed, away, with decades clean.

There's a dozen of things that I would use to say that I am just ungrateful or depressed, but I really don't have an excuse today not to be grateful for life today.

I had the chance to speak at Dale's Home Group on the Bridge meeting on Christmas. There was a lot of gratitude everyone expressed for his life and the message that he carried. I spoke a lot about total abstinence and how he was one of many members that carried a true message to me. I show my gratitude today by showing up to the new comer no matter what, by showing up for my family no matter if I have to work harder and longer and lose sleep. It's not where we are that counts but where we are going. I live by that code today. It helps me stay in this moment and realize how blessed I really am.

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

## Our pain

How easy is it to continue to point our finger outside ourselves instead of looking at what is really going on? We often create our own pain without even being aware of it. In NA we learn how to look at our part in situations.

Our old ways protected us from what we feared. Fear can disguise itself in many ways. Anger, resent-

to remember that I am a sick person with the disease of addiction and that everyone else here has the same disease I do. I cannot change anyone else or work their program for them, but I can work on myself and learn to focus on how I can recover to deal with these situations better. I am grateful to be the problem today because if I am not the problem there is no solution!

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

## Completely Broken and Spent

In a short period of time, our lives changed dramatically. We went from innocent childhood to a life of addiction

As a result, the situation in our lives went from secure to insecure, unpredictable, and to sustain even our basic needs. We had to find help, so we cried out for help. Our Desperate fears of how to provide for our basic needs pulled us into a pit of fear and despair. But then we found hope as we found the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous and the 12 steps that changed my life. We Surrender to the fact that although we are powerless, we are not hopeless.

Many of us when we first walked into our first NA meeting had tears pouring down our face. Sobbing out loud. Rubbing my eyes. Completely

broken and spent. Our waking emotions playing out in my subconscious trying to convince us there was no hope. Then we noticed others slowly entering the room. Yet we were not alarmed; in fact, we felt totally at peace; we felt like we knew them as they began to share their experience, strength, and hope.

Rather than fear, a strange sense of calm and safety washed over us. We immediately knew that in our spirit we were home. They spoke as if they knew our story. How could this be it was simple they had the same problem they were addicts they shared with us that with the Help of a Sponsor, others in the fellowship, and a Higher Power, we are able to start the healing process

As we began to work the process that was laid before us fully believing we experienced an encounter with the God of our understanding, this message kept echoing over and over in our mind and heart you are home. This is the place you have been searching for, "in this room, we could be restored of all that had been lost and broken."

We had heard words we had longed to hear. Words that reaffirmed we were not hopeless. Words that gave us great hope and reassured us we had been led one step at a time to the God who had the power to restore all that had been taken from our lives and indeed He had plans for us.

We honestly believed we had come to Him. A million, gazillion

times in fact. However, what I had not brought to Him was our total surrender and trust. Instead of surrendering our problems to Him, we just told Him about them constantly then continued trying to solve them on our own.

Rather than trusting for miraculous provision, we fretted and worried whether He would come through or not. We continually felt crushed and hopeless under countless adversities with our own wrong choices we faced great loss and calamity.

Whether it is our hearts, finances, relationships, or lives that need mending, God always has a plan to heal and restore. Although we don't know God's exact plans for our future, we do know He is good, and we fully believe that in the fellowship of NA God is restoring our heart and our life in His Hands as we work the steps.

Total surrender and faithfulness will always open the door for God's restoration to begin.

**In This Moment:** We pray dear God; you know our deepest worries and hurts and the areas where we desperately long for healing and restoration. Today we fully surrender those to You, and we ask You to help us have a joyous, expectant faith as we wait for You to move. We commit to trusting You, your ways, your plans, and You are timing from this day forward.

**Written: By an Anonymous**

**Addict From: North Carolina, USA**

## My Journey Continues

My journey continues to show me things that give me the opportunity to grow and mature, to trust in that in which I cannot see. As a result of our principles, I have come to see and accept that God's plans for me truly are better than anything that I could come up with. Today with more peace than ever before, I can experience harmony within this vessel in which my spirit resides. Recovery is a journey on which I have experienced both the good times and those times in which I just found to be impossible and overwhelming, yet I have come to find that the only impossible journey into the unknown is the one that allows my fear to stop me from taking that next step. Today with the promise in which I have been given has produced a new way of living for me and even my family members enjoy that in which our spiritual principles have allowed me to experience.

As I continue to move forward, many challenges are awaiting my arrival, but no longer am I willing to run from life on life's terms, as the cost of doing so, is just so high. No longer am I willing to trade off my self-respect, self-esteem, my values, and my principles to appease another or to let my fear cause me to turn my back on myself or those that I love. No longer is self-rejection acceptable, as I have found a solution to that in which ails me. Today I know that I have a disease, not just a phys-

## My Gratitude Speaks

Growing up when my brothers and I were young on December 25th we would wake up and see a room full of gifts. Looking back, I think one of the greatest gifts was knowing that my Dad was going to spend some time with us. It seemed as if it was the one day out of the year that he had to show up and be a Dad; and it was also like he felt like he needed to make up for all the other days where he neglected us or abused us. My Uncle Mike would show up each Holiday and do some random act of kindness for us. One Easter he stuck a goat in our backyard, and my parents had no clue where it came from. It was hilarious and the goat was eating everything in sight. The next year he drove by on a bulldozer and threw eggs over our fence and there were mice in them. He always knew how to make us laugh. He was our go to person when we were just depressed.

He would always be sitting in the garage at the concrete yard pulling motors out of concrete trucks. Sometimes he would disappear for a long time, get in trouble, end up in prison, or just jump from state to state using other people's identities. At that time, I didn't realize I was an addict just like him, but I always felt that connection. One Christmas he sent us a bunch of BB guns. My brother and I would stick them in trash bags and carry them down the road to the woods to go shoot cans and stuff.

As time went on, we both ended up in active addiction and holidays was just a chore. We had to dress up in my little brother's nice clothes because we didn't have nice things. We had to go to families houses and be looked at like we were not wanted there. People would lock doors to rooms when we showed up and hide their purses. Looking back, I don't believe I ever had any intention on stealing from any of them, although I was in active addiction, I rarely ever ran out of drugs.

Our family would give us cards and inside was money. We would immediately rip them open to see how much there was and try and see if we can get more drugs.

Our plates of food got smaller over the years, as our appetites shrunk. Family would say less and less to us. And every few years there was this small attempt to make a meeting after dinner and try and get or stay clean. When I did finally get clean it was about a year later when my Uncle Mike was killed by two other addicts. His last words to me was a year before that, he told me he didn't want to see me go down the road he was taking, he hated to see me getting on the bus as he was getting off, and he never wished I would make those choices. At that time I had been isolating from my family, living in different states and traveling clean. I spent many holidays with complete strangers and sometimes they weren't even in NA. Abandonment issues would always

Many revolted and continued to write using the open participation process. This has produced lots of literature that is in the open for input and review phase. It also has inspired many addicts today to start writing again and being a part of something bigger than themselves. No longer will we accept the lie that addicts cannot write. No longer will we stand back while others take away the creative freedom that NA offers. We do not have to accept anything that we feel goes against OUR 12 Traditions. EACH Group is autonomous. The Groups are in charge not a structure. There is no agenda. We ask addicts to write, and the process is more beautiful than I ever imagined it would be. Each addict's input is valuable. We look at NA history and make sure things are in line with what NA was founded on. This has brought up many great conversations regarding Total Abstinence, Group Conscience, Autonomy and the Spiritual Principles of our Steps and Traditions. When Groups accept their responsibility for carrying our message the freedom, we have experienced is beyond anything we could have ever imagined. Being a part of feels much more like service than trying to govern and dictate the lies that we have to approve a book so we can see what is in it. Before we started writing in that other structure (that today I don't believe is a service for NA but rather is a disservice because of the freedom it takes from Groups

and addicts) I tried participating in the writing of the Guiding Principles book and was actually sent a email basically telling me they weren't going to use any of the input I sent in. I have known addicts who know the hired writers that have been told they do not even look at the input addicts send in. It is easily provable also as the draft comes out many times when they are supposedly still accepting input for different sections of books they produce. Not to mention how there is not a Group tally and World Board members get to vote which their vote carries as much power as whole regions. Rigged systems are not solely responsible to the Groups. I prefer to use NA literature where every addict's voice is worth being heard and there are no effective leaders. There are just Trusted Servants.

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



ical issue but of mental and spiritual. There are no intellectual solutions for my spiritual issues therefore if I was going to come to enjoy recovery, I was going to have to explore and discover those spiritual solutions.

Secure in the fellowship of many men and women in which I have come to respect and have and continue to take guidance from. They have helped me see the path and light in which I follow today. As a result of living and experiencing my recovery, I have come to understand that acceptance and surrender is the key to my journey, not just a physical recovery but to the mental and spiritual issues in which I suffered from. I know today the recovery is about the healing of the physical, mental, and spiritual parts of my being, like a wagon wheel with three-spoke, with two of them broken, this would make that ride unreliable and failure is inevitable. It is not a matter if it will, but a matter of time.

Just for today. I will continue to face my challenges, as we have solutions today, from our principles to sponsorship, we can do this. No longer control by our disease but control by our desire to walk in the light of the present, as today we have been set free of the bondage of the darkness of addiction to walk our journey with hope and freedom. To maintain this recovery, I must continue to live the NA way of life and be open-minded to the truth. For recovery is, not a matter of my feelings today, it is a matter of

life and death.

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

## The Gift of Responsibility

From the moment we enter the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous we hear about responsibility. We are not responsible for our disease, but we are responsible for our recovery. Changes are we walked in without having any clue on how to act responsible in our lives. Our addiction turned us into obsessive and compulsive human beings with only one priority; our own selfish wants and needs. Our self-centered lifestyle makes it hard for us to understand how being responsible in areas that do not immediately give us what we want will help us.

Being responsible means, we have the duty to make sure things are done. This means we are accountable and willing to take responsibility for our actions in recovery. This teaches us that we must learn how to act responsible in our recovery, if we do not learn how to be responsible for our recovery, how then can we become responsible and productive members of society?

The first thing we learn is that we need to go to meetings, that's an action we must take in order to hear more about recovery. This brings

us in contact with many recovering addicts that show us how to be responsible. They are putting action into their recovery and are productive members of the Group they are attending.

We have a responsibility for our own recovery and in Narcotics Anonymous we learn that we cannot keep what we have without giving it away. So, our actions are also focused on making sure the Group can have its meetings and newcomers have a place to go to, an addict to call and a book to read. We start to make ourselves available to the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous this way. This is where we start to experience the freedom responsibility gives us. The actions we put in get us out of ourselves and we start to feel better about ourselves. We start to experience we have purpose in live and a place we fit in.

Being an active part of our Homegroup and Narcotics Anonymous as a whole gives us the direction, meaning and freedom we have sought in all the wrong places. We, Narcotics Anonymous, are responsible for carrying the message that any addict can get clean, loose the obsession to use and find a new way to live. So as members we participate in this purpose by giving our time and energy to other members and the Groups. It is in our surrender to this responsibility that gives us recovery from active addiction, with or without drugs. And the freedom from our own

self-centeredness.

If we trade our drug use for a self-centered lifestyle we never recover from the disease. We often respond to responsibility with fear. We must remember ourselves that even if we are responsible for our own actions, we are not alone and can always get the help we need. If we surrender ourselves to responsibility by acting responsible in all areas of our lives, we find a new way to live filled with hope, joy, and freedom.

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



## **The Difference Between Open Participation Literature and Professionally Written Literature**

There has been lots of confusion on the topic of how NA literature is written today. While personally I do not believe any literature that uses professional editing or writers is NA literature some are saying it is. The difference between how literature was written using the open participation process compared to what a service structure that is responsible to a corporation believes is completely different. I have seen it firsthand. At our Home Group we write Gray Book Reflections every Tuesday. There was lots of fear when we started doing this. We knew many would be hesitant and many would chastise us. What has come from it is the best form of how we can live our 7th Tradition that I have seen in my years in NA. Addicts have come in with one day clean and encouraged to write regarding the topic. They were made to feel a part of from the first day in the rooms. Many have said it was something they will never forget being a part of. It takes time, patience, and acceptance of the process to make it happen, but each week a new GBR is written that has not been re written or edited or touched by any professionals. Many claim this is not NA literature because

it has not been approved by a structure directed by a corporation. They claim because that structure has the NA name in its title that it is some sort of authority regarding what is and what is not NA. This is quite different from having each Group responsible for sharing and carrying OUR message of hope to the still suffering addict. At our HG we believe in addicts and we believe addicts can write and have continued to write throughout NA's history. For those that are unaware the process of how a service structure that was called the World Service Office at one time and now is called NAWS writes literature has changed drastically over the years. Today professional writers are hired to put together ideas and literature. Many times, this is seen as there is clearly an agenda to affiliate the NA program with the treatment industry. In fact, that is one of the places that it really started. The 4th edition of the Basic Text was to be a light edit. Instead, it changed everything and did not correct only grammar, etc. It changed philosophies and removed many lines from the Basic Text. It was admitted that a payment had been made to the office to make the Basic Text more treatment industry friendly as a payment was accepted from Hazelden to change OUR book. The hard-won experience of addicts that gave of their time, blood, motorcycles to write OUR Basic Text was not good enough. The cash cow was going to be slain no matter what addicts said.