



## **GREAT EXPECTATIONS ?**

Have you ever known someone that you really had a hard time being around? Did it seem like they were constantly disappointing you or doing things wrong? Was it all you could do to not grab them and yell “What do you think you’re doing” as you tried to shake some sense into them? Since being in Narcotics Anonymous, I’ve known people like that. They would upset me constantly and make me say the Serenity Prayer repeatedly when I was around them. But then I found out something that made it a lot easier for me to deal with those people. There really wasn’t anything wrong with them. The problem was with me.

I have a tendency at times to place expectations on others and, as a result, I am often disappointed. But it’s not the other person who disappoints me. I disappoint myself

by deciding how others are supposed to act or react, and then I start thinking that what I decided the other person will say or do is actually reality. But it can’t be, because it hasn’t happened yet.

We talk about placing unrealistic expectations on others, but any expectations I place on others are unrealistic, because I have already run on ahead of you and decided the outcome of the situation.

When I place expectations on you, I take away your freedom to decide your actions, and I unfairly judge you according to my standards, not yours. I need to just relax and let things happen in their own time, and allow others to act and speak the way they want to, not the way I think they should.

Maybe my great expectations aren’t so great after all.

Ken H.

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# Loneliness is all that it's cracked up to be.

Everyone in life has experienced that empty feeling of loneliness to some extent. That desire to feel connected with another human being is a powerful emotion, basic to the soul of every person. Yet, in our addiction, our thoughts were consumed by doing anything necessary to feed our disease, without regards to the consequences. Our behaviors alienated many people in our lives, and the result was solitary confinement by self-will.

Once we completely accepted that our disease enslaved us, we individually had to end our self-imposed isolation and reach out for help. Little by little each of us found solutions through working the 12 Steps and the spiritual principles of our program, and most importantly, through a relationship with a loving Higher Power. Most of us didn't see a flash of light, or feel the earth tremble beneath our feet, but we became open-minded and willing enough to turn our loneliness over to our personal Higher Power. We began to feel hope that our lives would get better in recovery.

The God of our understanding speaks to each of us through fellow members both inside and outside of meetings. That same God writes to each of us through the literature of our program. And that same God listens to us not only during our prayers and meditations, but also throughout our day. We are no longer alone because our Higher Power is always right there beside us; always has been or else we wouldn't have lived to the point of recovery.

Now, today, each of us can leave our thoughts of loneliness and isolation behind. That harsh pain of loneliness may return from time to time, but it won't last. Just an outstretched hand to the God of your understanding will help you feel His presence so long as you "open the door".

If I feel loneliness creeping back into my life, am I willing to reach out to my Higher Power to fill my spirit today?

Joe A. – grateful recovering addict in central Pennsylvania

**The Guardian** is a free monthly publication serving the Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous.

**Newsletter Subcommittee**  
Vice-chair: Randy E.  
Email: ucaguardian@hotmail.com

**Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous Helpline: 866-454-3784 24 hours toll free**

**Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous web site:**  
<http://www.nauca.org>

**Meetings in the Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous:**

Crossville NA Group  
Crossville, Tennessee

Daily Reprieve  
Wartburg, Tennessee

Getting Started  
Crossville, Tennessee

Freedom Group  
Allardt, Tennessee

Middle of Nowhere Group  
Albany, Kentucky

Primary Purpose Group  
Smithville, Tennessee

Unity Group  
Crossville, Tennessee

Who Are You Group  
Pikeville, Tennessee  
(Note: This meeting is held in a correctional facility and is only accessible to those with clearance and approval.)

## We need your help!

We need your help. The Guardian is in need of submissions. It can be a personal story of how you used the Fellowship or your Higher Power to get through a tough time, your views on a particular quote from the Narcotics Anonymous literature that you happen to like, Or a simple expression of gratitude.

Don't worry if you think you can't write well enough, we will be happy to make any spelling or punctuation corrections for you. The important thing is that you will be sharing your recovery with another addict. After all, we can only keep what we have by giving it away. The length of your article isn't very important either, just remember that shorter is better.

The only real criteria for submissions are that they reflect the message of Narcotics Anonymous and stick to the identification of ourselves as addicts suffering from the disease of addiction.

Submissions can be brought to the Upper Cumberland Area Service meeting, sent to The Guardian, 140 Cottle Ln, Jamestown, Tenn. 38556 or E-mailed to: [ucaguardian@hotmail.com](mailto:ucaguardian@hotmail.com)

Thank you for your support.

## Perseverance in Recovery

Recovery is not always an easy task, and is not for the scared and timid. Recovery takes courage. Having true courage does not mean without fear, as I once thought. I have learned that courage is facing our fears, continuing on even when we are afraid.

I have heard it said many times, "staying clean is the easy part". It was not so easy for me when I first came to the fellowship. After being here for a few days, I began to understand what was meant by that saying.

Many times since I came to the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous, I have had to face the uncertainty of change. I was familiar with using, facing life while not using was frightening. I knew how to manipulate people to get my way, learning to trust the God of my understanding to help me through the rough spots took time. When I saw that my old survival skills were useless to me in recovery, I was afraid.

There have been times when I could not see where I was making any progress. I still acted out on my defects of character. I would try to run on self will, or force things to be the way that I

wanted them to be. These are the things that got me here in the first place. I began to see, if I was not willing to change, I would lose the gifts recovery had given me. I had to find a deeper level of surrender. I had to confront my fears of the unknown. Even though I had no idea what life would be like, I had to find the courage to give up, stop fighting, and let go.

Just for Today, that is how it works for this addict. When I finally realized that I could not change the outcome of tomorrow or undo what happened yesterday, I was able to live in the moment. When I do the next right thing, and leave the results up to my Higher Power, I have no reason to be afraid. I have found it easier to use the Spiritual Principles of NA, if I take life one moment at a time. I did not find out how this worked overnight, it took time, and I do not have all the answers, but thru perseverance, commitment, and courage I have made it this far.

Randy E

## The Sunrise

As I set here on the front porch  
And wait for the rising sun  
I think about the battles I've fought  
And the Freedom that I've won  
But the war is far from over  
You know it's really just begun  
Because I have yet to free myself  
From all things I've done  
Today I'll ride into battle  
Armed with strength from my God  
'Cause I know the enemy is out there  
But I'll just greet him with a nod  
I've met him, oh so many times  
And he always looks the same  
I know him as my Addiction  
But you may call him different names  
I wouldn't call him "The Devil"  
Although they must be tight  
'Cause he'll come creeping right up on you  
Invading your dreams at night  
He'll jump right up in your face  
Swear that he's your best friend  
Take you down a long hard road  
Then abandon you in the end  
So if you ever meet this dude  
Smile, just shake his hand  
Tell him "Thanks for sharing"  
But I've got other plans  
Then pull out your bag of tools  
And cut him down to size  
Then you'll be free to sit on the porch  
Thank God, and watch the sunrise

Craig E

## Strung out on Life ?

*One of the biggest stumbling blocks to recovery seems to be placing unrealistic expectations on ourselves or others.  
(basic text pg. 78)*

Talk about placing unrealistic expectations on ourselves. I go to three meetings a week, do service work at the group level and the area level, and work over 40 hours a week. I also try to spend as much time as possible with my wife and children, take care of my home and yard, and do my own maintenance on my cars.

Before I came to NA, I was in jail most of the time. I had no job, no home, and no cars. It's a miracle that I still had a wife. The thought of going through a day without using was something I considered impossible.

I must always remember that without recovery I will not have these things that seem to take up all of my time. But if I get so carried away with work and service that I have no time to work my steps or talk with my sponsor, I may forget that recovery is about learning how to apply spiritual principles in my life inside and outside of the rooms of NA.

I'm an addict, and I can get carried away with everything I do. Learning how to be a productive member of society is a matter of living life on life's terms without letting life overwhelm me. The thing that helps me the most when I get strung out on life is to go back to the basics of recovery, I have to remember to "HALT". Am I too hungry, angry, lonely, or tired?

*Anonymous*

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The next meeting of the Upper Cumberland Service Committee will be on December 18 2007 At 2:30 pm CST in Crossville, Tennessee at the Crossville NA facility. Come check it out to see what the service committee is doing for the Upper Cumberland Area and your group to aid in better carrying the message to the still suffering addict.