



Serving the Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous

# The Guardian

Issue 3 Volume 1 March 2006

## COURAGE TO CHANGE

Change is not something recovering addicts always accept willingly. There are times when we will cry, cuss, fight and resist change with every ounce of energy we have.

Even if we know that the change we are going through is for the better, we still may not want to go through it, and will try our best to convince ourselves that we are better off right where we are, even if we know that where we are is causing us nothing but pain and misery.

The ironic part of this, of course, is that when we were in active addiction, we were constantly changing. Changing jobs, homes,

friends, lovers, our lives were all about change.

And how many times did we completely change everything about ourselves - just picking up and taking off, leaving everyone and everything behind, to go to a strange place surrounded by people we didn't know to start all over again - without even thinking twice about it?

So why is it that there are times in recovery when even the smallest wrinkle in our plans causes us to run around in a panic like Chicken Little screaming "the sky is falling"? After all, aren't we all living, breathing miracles? Shouldn't that be enough to show us that we can get through anything with the help of our Higher Power and the Fellowship?

For me, I find that the times when I am most willing to accept change and know that everything will be okay no matter what, are the times that my faith is at it's strongest. And my faith is at it's strongest when I align myself with the will of my Higher Power, and instead of asking in any given situation "What should I do?", I ask "What does God want me to do?"

Courage to change. Courage is the direct result of faith, and faith is the direct result of taking action and allowing the God of my understanding to guide me where He wants me to go, then following, knowing that anything He will lead me to, he will lead me through.

- Ken H.

## "MY GRATITUDE SPEAKS ..."

If you would like to show your gratitude to Narcotics Anonymous for the gift of recovery you have received, why not give back by through service work?

The Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous has a number of open service positions, and could always use the help of recovering addicts who share a love for this program that has given us back our lives, as well as a desire to reach out to that still suffering addict who has yet to hear our message of recovery.

If you would like to get involved, or just come to check it out, the Area Service Committee meets at 2:30 pm on the third Sunday of every month at Crossville NA in Crossville, Tenn. Your homegroups's GSR should be able to answer any other questions you may have. Come and be a part of, we'd love to have you!

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## JUDGING OTHERS' RECOVERY

Do you remember comparing yourself to other recovering addicts? I do. I would compare myself to the newcomer and say "Thank God I'm not like them." Then I would compare myself to the old-timer and say "God, I wish I could be like them." I was either better than - or not as good as - someone else. I couldn't just accept that I was where I was and let it go at that.

I try to make acceptance a big part of my program today, because I am always finding new things I need to accept, and - more times than not - I find that the person I have to accept more than anyone else is me.

You see, those newcomers weren't aware that I was judging their program critically, because I never vocalized my feelings. They were only spoken in my head.

Neither were the old-timers aware of how I envied their program, because I was never one to "swoon" over someone or idolize them publicly. Once again, it lived only in

my own head.

No, others were unaware and unaffected by how I judged them and their programs. But I was aware, and I was affected by my quickness to "pigeonhole" others by how I thought they were supposed to behave.

I was so immersed in how I thought others should be living their programs, that before long I wasn't paying a whole lot of attention to my own program. Of course, my recovery began to suffer because of it, and my already critical eye became even more critical.

So how did I learn to quit worrying about everyone else's programs so much? By realizing the need to start concentrating on my own program. I realized that, at the rate I was going, using would be inevitable, and I didn't want to go there. So I knew I had to look honestly at my own program and where I was in my recovery and my life.

It was then that I came to an acceptance of myself and where I was at in my recovery. Because I realized that where I'm at today is not where I was

yesterday, or where I'll be tomorrow. There is always room for improvement, but I also need to recognize the growth I have made in my recovery. After all, no one is all good or all bad. Right?

So when I began to accept that I am a work in progress, constantly growing and evolving, I found it easier to accept others in the same way.

I also found out, to my amazement, that some "newcomers" seem to have an uncanny natural grasp and understanding of this program. And some "old-timers" have very little to offer but their clean time. That is not to be critical of anyone, it just shows the futility of labeling others based on where I think they should be.

What I need to do today is take my own inventory and see if I'm okay with where I'm at today, because tomorrow I'll be in a different place, and I can't judge where you are, because I have no idea where you're at. It really simplifies things for me, and I need that sometimes.

- Anonymous

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

### Newsletter Subcommittee

Vice-chair: Ken H.

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

End of the Road Group  
Woodbury, Tennessee

Freedom Group  
Allardt, Tennessee

Middle of Nowhere Group  
Albany, Kentucky

New Beginnings  
Huntsville, Tennessee

Primary Purpose Group  
Smithville, Tennessee

Unity Group  
Crossville, Tennessee

## NA TRIVIA

Answers to last month's trivia questions:

1. What year was NA founded?

A: 1953

2. What was the original name of Narcotics Anonymous?

A: San Fernando Valley Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous

3. What is the official name of the Basic Text?

A: Narcotics Anonymous

4. Although no one person was ever singled

out as the founder of NA, there was someone who was largely responsible for keeping the fellowship together in it's early years and is considered by many to be the founder. Who was this person?

A: Jimmy K. or Jimmy Kinnon.

5. The words "drugs" and "narcotics" appear nowhere in NA's Twelve Steps. True or False?

True: Unlike most other similar programs, NA's focus is on the disease of addiction instead of the symptom, or particular drug or substance.

6. Does Jimmy K.'s personal story appear in the "personal stories" section of the Basic Text?

A: No. Jimmy's story is actually the italicized section at the beginning of the chapter "We Do Recover". In fact, Jimmy's is the only personal story that appears in the first section of the Basic Text.

7. In the early days of NA, what was the reason given by Jimmy K. for putting out so much literature?

A: Because there were addicts who were not even born yet who would need it.

## 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 more than 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 is 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 166 Tami Kay Rd Dowelltown, Tenn 37059, or emailed to [ucaguardian@hotmail.com](mailto:ucaguardian@hotmail.com).

Thank you for your help and support.

## RECOVERY TERMS MADE SIMPLE

Addict - Me.

Higher Power - Not me.

Powerless - Me on a good day.

Self Will - Me on a bad day.

Change - Me growing.

Complacency - Me not growing.

Acceptance - Me living in the real world.

Denial - Me living in my world.

Twelfth Step - Me carrying the message.

Thirteenth Step - Me carrying the mess.

Forgiveness - Me working on my recovery.

Resentment - Me working on my relapse.

Faith - Me living without fear.

Hopelessness - Me living in fear.

- Ken H.

## CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE OF RECOVERY-Part Three

Continued from last issue

(What follows is a solutions summary of the "Atmosphere of Recovery" presentation from our Dallas forum, 7/2004, presented by John S. (Show-me Region). These solutions are not an expressed consensus of the southern forum as a whole, nor are they the expressed opinions of Regions participating in the SZF. No one person strongly disagreed with any of the "Solutions".)

### Predators in meetings

It is up to every home group member to guard for predatory behavior from anyone. Have 2-3 home group members discuss with the offending member after the meeting. Make a "no predatory behavior tolerated" statement as part of the meeting format. Discuss the detriments of predatory behavior at conventions and workshops. Confront your friends if they're guilty of predatory behavior.

### Issues of complete abstinence

Remember that we are not professionals and that some people suffer from conditions for which medication is essential; it is not our place to determine what those conditions are. If prescribed medication use is creating conflict and problems for members, steer them to other members with similar experience or to NAWS or the NAWS web site. Read the

pamphlet Medication in Recovery and discuss as a meeting topic. Each group must determine how to handle drug replacement therapy, i.e. methadone and psychotropic medication. Consider letting members share unless it's disruptive to meetings. Many groups do not allow those on drug replacement therapy to chair meetings or hold service positions, but again, each group must decide its policy.

### Religious versus spiritual

Reiterate in meeting format that this is a spiritual, not religious, program of recovery. Host a third step discussion meeting in which members discuss the many ways they have found paths to spirituality. If a person is dominating the meeting discussion with specific religious chatter that isn't NA, the leader should redirect the meeting as described with other forms of disruption. Home group members can take the lead and chime in after this person speaks and discuss how their way to spirituality is different and how that is the beauty of NA. If a member persists in presenting conflicting religious views and you risk confusing or alienating newcomers, have several home group members invite the person to coffee and discuss why they need to keep the discussion in spiritual, not religious, terms.

### Conclusion - creating an atmosphere of recovery

Meeting formats are an excellent way to lay the ground rules for sharing, staying on topic and the primary purpose. Keeping the focus on the newcomer and providing a safe environment with a clear message brings everything into focus. Provide an orientation sheet for meeting leaders/chairs; explain what they can do to maintain an atmosphere of recovery. Discuss these issues at group business meeting and have a plan of action ahead of time. Don't tolerate illegal weapons or drugs in the meeting space; call the police if necessary. Home group members should take the lead in making everyone feel comfortable - walking the walk that everyone is welcome regardless . . . Get out of your own comfort zone and reach out to groups isolated geographically, by common cultural or geographic needs, handicap, etc. Creating an atmosphere of recovery is up to every individual member - by setting a personal example for others to follow we can prove that no addict, anywhere, need die from the horrors of addiction.

(reprinted from Volume 3 Issue 3 of the Solutions pamphlet presented by the southern Zonal Forum of Narcotics Anonymous)

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## P.I. Learning Day

Saturday, March 25, 2006, 10:00 AM CDT  
Fourth Dimension Club, 2229 West Ave., Crossville, TN 38555

Directions: Exit I-40 at #317, Crossville/Jamestown; from the West, and from the East, turn left on 127S, and approximately 2.8 miles and turn right on Elmore (Walgreens) at the 6th light. Go 3/10 turn right at the first light (KMart). This is 70 West. Go 8/10 of a mile. The Fourth Dimension Club is on the left (between two churches.) Meeting house is in back.

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The neat meeting of the Upper Cumberland Service Committee will be on April 16, 2006 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.

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