



THE GUARDIAN

APRIL 2011

Finding Freedom In The Fourth Step

"We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves." (Step Four)

Our Basic Text tells us *"The purpose of a searching and fearless moral inventory is to sort through the confusion and the contradiction of our lives, so that we can find out who we really are."* I really had no idea who I was, I had lived in a world designed by my addiction. There were no clear lines between fact and fiction. I twisted everything to justify my behavior, I had told so many lies that I started believing them. Confusion and contradiction had become a way of life for this addict. Conning, manipulating, stealing, lying, and self deception had become "normal". I used this behavior to get what I wanted, what I thought I had to have. I was living in a fantasy.

We work the first three steps with a sponsor to prepare for this crucial self examination. We are building a new life and must have a strong foundation. The first step helped me to feel good about myself by trying to be honest, it felt good to finally start telling the truth and I wanted to feel good about myself in other ways as well. The glimpse of hope that I found in the second step allowed me to believe that I could be restored to some level of sanity, and the hope was growing. In the third step I began the process of seeking help from a power greater than myself. I didn't have to do this alone, I could give up fighting and just do the next right thing. What a relief.

Sitting down with pen and paper to write *"a searching and fearless moral*

inventory" was the single most freeing act I've ever experienced. When I read the words that I had written I could no longer deny my defects of character, my lack of morals, my unprincipled lifestyle, and the fact that my choices were the cause of my life being unmanageable. I could then clearly see the people I had hurt, the pain I caused, and the amends I owed. I also found things about myself that came as a complete surprise. I wasn't a cruel animal, just a sick man that wanted to heal. I realized I had many good points, and a desire to stay clean was at the top of my list.

Working the forth step allowed me to get to the nature of the harm that I had caused, I was see myself for who I really was for the first time. By sharing this with another in the fifth step, I realized I was not as terrible or as great as I thought, I'm simply another addict that survived my addiction to find the NA program. Now I'm free to work the rest of the steps, to become willing to have these defects removed, to humbly ask my higher power for help with them. Now I can make a list of the people I've harmed, and become willing to make my amends. More freedom rolls in when I start marking off the names from that list in the ninth step. We can never find out how it feels to be free from our past if we never work the forth step, this step is the beginning of our freedom.

Joe Addict

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Emotional Intimacy

Someone asked me about intimacy. Emotional intimacy is a revealing of who I am when no one is watching. It can be frightening and it truly is a risk because the potential for rejection is real. I had somehow come to convince myself that I was both superior and inferior to everyone I met. What is that saying? An egomaniac with an inferiority complex? When I am myself, warts and all, I am most vulnerable.

Here is the rub though. Without taking that risk, without letting another know who I am at the deepest level, I deny myself all chance of truly being loved for who I am at the core. Someone may love me for what I do, how I look or if I make them laugh...but they will not love me for me, because they do not know who that is.

One of the beauties of working the 12 steps (yes, all of them, yes, that one too) is that not only do I come to know myself...why I do what I do, how I do what I do, but I am letting my sponsor know this about me as well. And as I share with those my sponsor, I can't help but share what I am learning

about myself. And when I share in meetings, I am doing the same thing. That is one of the reasons I think it is important to talk about what is happening in my life today in meetings. Life on life's terms and what I am doing to stay clean in spite of it all, good and bad. Eventually, if I am doing this thing correctly, I bring it home. I share who I am with family and friends outside the fellowship. Then one day, I realize that I am no longer pretending to be someone I am not. I am just being me and I am so much more (and much less in some cases) than I thought I was.

Living a life without risks is living a half life. And I am not talking about bungee jumping. This is far harder than jumping off the side of a mountain. This takes faith, courage in the face of fear and a willingness to put myself out there time and time again. But ultimately, there is not much of a life without it.

Namaste' Donna

(Reprinted from the Cleantimes Newsletter)

The next meeting of the Upper Cumberland Area Service Committee will be held on May 15, 2011 At 2:30 pm CST in Crossville, Tennessee at the Crossville NA facility. We are always in need of addicts that want to be of service to our fellowship, come and check it out to see what the service committee is doing for the Upper Cumberland Area, and your group, to help us fulfill our primary purpose, carrying the message of recovery to the still suffering addict. We have many positions that need to be filled, come and experience the many benefits of service.

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

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

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

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

New Way To Live Group
Crossville, Tennessee

Crossville NA Group
Crossville, Tennessee

Promise of Hope Group
Cookeville, Tennessee

New Beginnings Group
Oneida, Tennessee
&
Helenwood, Tennessee

Getting Started
Crossville, Tennessee

Freedom Group
Allardt, Tennessee

Unity Group
Crossville, Tennessee

* Who Are You Group
Pikeville, Tennessee

* Free And Clean Group
Pikeville, Tennessee

* This meeting is held in a correctional facility and is only accessible to those with clearance and approval.

Basic Text Tradition Worksheet

Please take the time to use your Basic Text with these questions to improve your understanding of the Traditions of our fellowship. The principles that the Traditions teach us can help protect our primary purpose. So that no addict need die from the horrors of addiction.

TRADITION FOUR:

"Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or NA as a whole" (Page 63-64)

Tradition Four guarantees freedom of each individual NA group to have its own atmosphere of recovery that best suits its members in carrying out the primary purpose.

1. What is necessary for our group survival? What does autonomy mean? (Paragraph 1)
2. If we are truly autonomous why do we have service committees, offices, activities, hot lines and other activities? (Paragraph 2)
3. What is the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship about? (Paragraph 2)
4. What is the result of the services mentioned in question one? (Paragraph 2)
5. What is the Narcotics Anonymous Group? (Paragraph 3)
6. What are the two basic types of meetings? What are some of the meeting formats? (Paragraph 3)
7. The group format varies, but does the function of a group vary? (Paragraph 4)
8. What does our autonomy do and why do we guard it so carefully? (Paragraph 5)
9. What is the one exception to our complete freedom of autonomy? (Paragraph 6)
10. How can autonomy, like group conscience, be a two-edged sword? (Paragraph 6)
11. What must we check to make sure all will be well? (Paragraph 6)
12. How can we apply and practice the spiritual lesson of learning to stand and grow on our own at home? (From the Heart)

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.

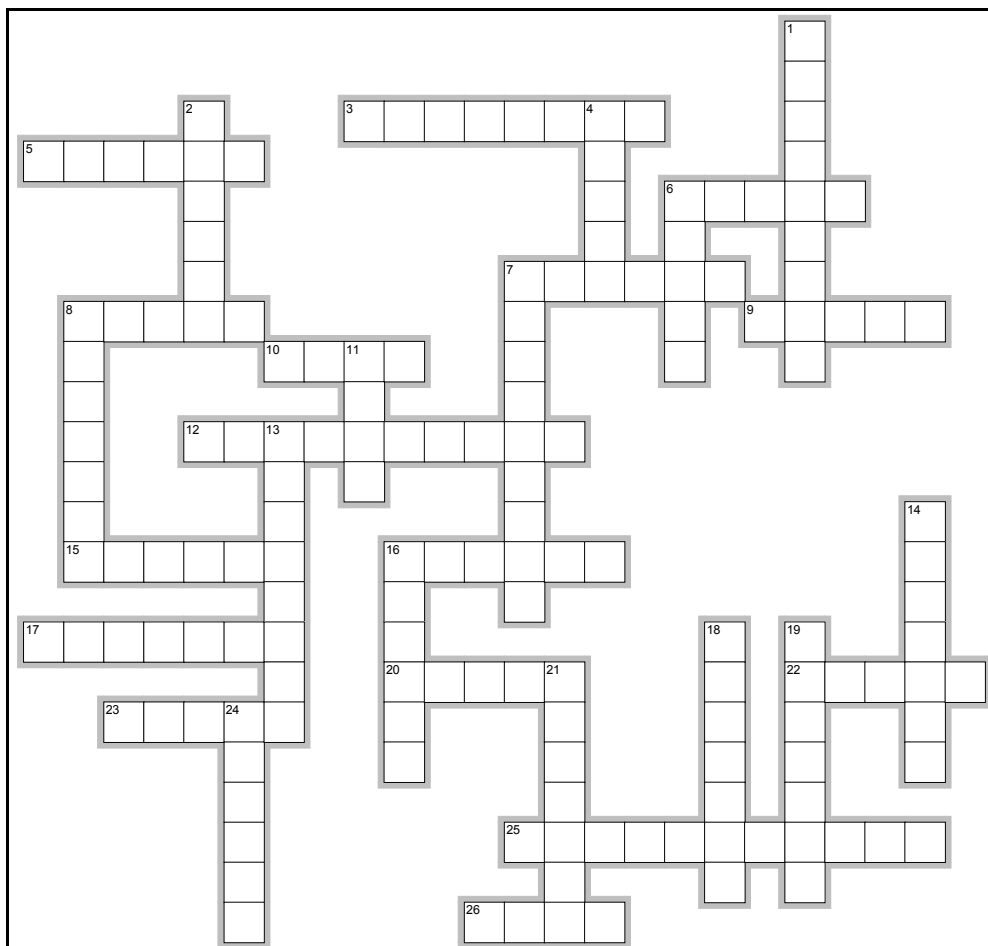
Don't worry if you think you can't write well enough, we will be happy to make any spelling or punctuation corrections for you. The important thing is that you will be sharing your recovery with another addict. After all, we can only keep what we have by giving it away. The length of your article isn't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

Thank you for your support.

“How It Works” Steps 1, 2, 3



Learning to use our literature helps us stay clean, the solutions are always in there.

All of the words in the puzzle can be found in the "Fifth Edition Basic Text"
Chapter Four pages 17 - 26

Across

3. "We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong _____ admitted it." (pg 17)
5. "Our addiction gives us a _____ ground for understanding one another." (pg 19)
6. "This decision is based on _____." (pg 25)
7. "The process of coming to believe restores us to _____." (pg 24)
8. "We began to see evidence of some _____ that could not be fully explained." (pg 24)
9. "Surrendering to the will of our Higher Power gets easier with _____ practice." (pg 26)
10. "We accept our addiction and _____ the way it is." (pg 22)
12. "These are the _____ that made our recovery possible." (pg 17)
15. "Insanity is using drugs day after day knowing that only physical and _____ destruction comes when we use." (pg 23)
16. "There is one thing more than anything else that will _____ us in our recovery..." (pg 18)
17. "We found that the higher our drugs took us, the lower they _____ us." (pg 25)
20. "Powerlessness means using _____ against our will." (pg 20)
22. "Social acceptability does not _____ recovery." (pg 21)
23. "No one _____ convince us that we were addicts." (pg 19)
25. "Having given our will and lives to our addiction, in utter _____, we looked for another way." (pg 25)
26. "Some of us didn't take this _____ seriously at first..." (pg 23)

Down

1. "We feel that our way is _____, for one addict can best understand and help another addict." (pg 18)
2. "At times during our recovery, the decision to ask for God's help is our greatest _____ of strength and courage." (pg 26)
4. "We can _____ to function in the world in which we live." (pg 22)
6. "Our disease is progressive, incurable and _____." (pg 20)
7. "Only after _____ are we able to overcome the alienation of addiction." (pg 22)
8. "The foundation of our _____ is the admission that we, of ourselves, do not have power over addiction." (pg 21)
11. "We need to admit this _____ in order to recover." (pg 20)
13. "We _____ ourselves, and lived in _____ prisons that we built with loneliness." (pg 19)
14. "We are people with the disease of addiction who must _____ from all drugs in order to recover." (pg 18)
16. "They are our defense against addiction which is a _____ disease." (pg 19)
18. "We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could _____ us to sanity." (pg 17)
19. "Insanity is repeating the same mistakes and expecting different _____." (pg 23)
21. "If we are thorough and _____, we will notice a change for the better." (pg 26)
24. "We saw that willpower alone would not work for any _____ of time." (pg 21)