



THE GUARDIAN

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Something Different

"We could not live and enjoy life as other people do. We had to have something different and we thought we had found it in drugs" (Basic Text pg. 13)

It seems like my entire life has been a never ending search for "something different." Maybe it's because there always seemed to be something missing from my life, some emptiness that needed to be filled. Maybe it's because I've always felt different, never really fitting in anywhere. Or maybe I just wanted to be different, you know, that attention seeking behavior. As I read the above lines from the Text recently and pondered these questions, I realized how many times in the past I "thought" I had found that "something different"

When I was a teen I "thought" I had found it in social acceptability. But then, I still felt like an outsider. even when surrounded by my closest friends. Then I "thought" I had found it in marriage and family life...until my marriage disintegrated. I "thought" I had found it in religion and quickly became a fervent church-goer; but I soon grew weary of the demands of a Christian life. Next I "thought" I had found it in career and financial success; but that too, failed to satisfy. And finally, I "thought" I had found it in drugs. When I was high I seemed to fit in anywhere. When I was high I didn't care so much about things like family, God, or careers. Everything was better when I used...for a while. Then what

Then what I thought was the solution to all my problems became the biggest problem of all.

When I came to NA I'm not sure what I expected, but I certainly never expected what I got. Our Text talks about how at first our using "seemed to be social, or at least controllable." But that "we had little indication of the disaster that the future held for us." In this same way, when I came to NA, I didn't have an inkling of the spiritual journey I was about to embark upon. I wasn't even sure that I wanted to stop using; I just wanted to be able to stop while I still had some money left. What I got when I was finally able to find that place of surrender, was so much more than I ever expected. What I got was that "something different" that I had been looking for my whole life. I found a sense of belonging, a place where I finally really did "fit in," a place where I would be fully accepted just as I was. I found a sense of purpose and direction, something that I felt passionate about...carrying our message of recovery to the still suffering addict. Most importantly, I found a vibrant new relationship with a Higher Power that is

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Spiritual Prosperity

I've noticed something since I've been coming to Narcotics Anonymous meetings, it seems to me, and this is just my take on things, that those addicts who are seeking to find that conscious contact with the God of their understanding are more at peace with the world around them. These people are easy to spot, they are to ones who come to meetings and share about the solutions they use in their encounters with the hardships that living life on life's terms can bring. These addicts are the ones who look to the principles contained in the Steps when guidance is needed. They are not to be found in a meeting complaining about what a shitty day they've had, or bitching about how their relationships never work out.

It's in these members that we are able to see what our lives can be like if we too work our Steps and seek our Higher Power's will for us. The Narcotics Anonymous program is able to do much more for us than just help us stop using drugs, with this program we can also find a new way to live, at least that's what our Basic Text tells us. In the process of working the Steps we learn to take our own inventory, we learn to take it regularly. We also learn not to take the inventory of others. In this way, we can begin to see what our part has been in the

conflicts and disagreements that are sure to occur as we start our new lives. We learn that we cannot change the world, we can only change ourselves.

The word God is mentioned ninety two times in the first one hundred and three pages of our Basic Text. Could this be because of how important it is for us to learn to rely on a Power greater than ourselves when we need help? Is it possible for us to find Spiritual Prosperity without seeking the guidance of the God of our understanding? There are many addicts in our rooms who have spent a good deal of time looking for a way to find the serenity our program tells us about. When asked these questions they will surely share with us about how their lives changed when they found a way to improve their conscious contact with God, as they understood Him.

I got clean and found that I could still be a self-centered, egotistical, control freak. Surely, myself and those around me would be much happier if I would take the time to really work my Steps and ask for some relief from my defects of character. Today, I want everything that life has to offer, I want to find out what my Higher Power's will is for me.

A still suffering Addict

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 web site: <http://www.nauca.org>

Meetings in the Upper Cumberland Area of Narcotics Anonymous:

Rockwood New Way
To Live Group
Rockwood, Tennessee

Crossville NA Group
Crossville, Tennessee

Getting Started
Crossville, Tennessee

Freedom Group
Allardt, Tennessee

Middle of Nowhere Group
Albany, Kentucky

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.)

PRACTICING THE STEPS

When I was on the third step, I ran into a situation with my car. The transmission went out. I didn't have the money to fix it, with new or used parts. I had done the writing on my 3rd step, and my sponsor always has me explain to him how I am living the steps before I even sit down and go over the writing with him. Well in the past I would have been totally irate...I would have been upset, mad, cussing... Instead, I stopped and prayed. My HP told me to do the footwork...He will help me. He will not do it for me, but he will help me. SO I got out a pen and paper and started calling around to get prices. New transmission work was a joke. Not for the car that I had. So I tried the junk yards...found a used one cheap, and I also found a shop that would install it for me at a good price. They would also deliver the part to the car shop at no charge. All I had to do was get my car there. You see I applied the first three steps to this problem, I cant, he can, and I think I will let him. Then, someone that is a close friend called me that day. I explained the situation to them. These people treat me like family...and they ended up helping me pay for the used parts, and the towing of my car to the shop. My mother helped me pay to have it installed. So with turning this over to my HP, doing the footwork that needed to be done, He put people in my life to help me. Thanks HP and family.

Something Different

(continued from page one)

vital and growing and that completely satisfies, and that makes it possible for me to have peace in the midst of life's storms.

I'll admit there have been times when I wondered if NA was going to be just one more stop along the way, one more thing that would ultimately disappoint and leave me floundering around again. But each day that goes by

I feel my faith and trust growing, I feel more enthusiastic, more excited about this thing called recovery, and more confident that I have finally found that "something different" that I've been looking for my whole life. Everything that using drugs promised me, recovery has delivered! And they say "More will be revealed," so I'll keep coming and hope to see you...on the Road.

A Fellow Traveler

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.

Thanks to our friends in the recovering community of the Southwest Area in the California Inland Region we now have these wonderful Word Find puzzles. We hope to have one each month, enjoy.

STEP ELEVEN

C O N S C I O U S H T I A F R Y H J K W
O E N B H V C X Z T B V W C N R F Q I O
N C T M O O S D P Y H T A P M E S L D R
T N H L O K P E H J G F R E E V L F Y K
A A A Q S W C E R E G D E L W O N K T S
C L N M E C T Y N U O I N P A C S P I D
T A K C A X Z L K O J H E G L E A R N F
V B S B P R A C T I C E S N M R M I E Q
P H T W O R G S Y T R L S L A E W N R R
E U I I M P R O V E O P A A I S O C E E
T R O F F E E J R H G N F U N I D I S D
S K L Z D X Y C V P O B D N T M Q P W N
K L P N O I A U Y I S T R A A I E L H E
E J U H G F R D T T S A T Z I X R E E R
S C L E A N P O R J B I V H N L C I L R
P M A Q A Z M E W R D S X E G Y Y D P U
M G T E V E N F R E S U L T O U R R C S
I Y H N P G U J M W M K I O D P O R L H
L N O I T A D N U O F F G H J K L S A F
G X L H K H G S A P E R E N S U R E F C

By AD

ACCEPT
AWARENESS
BALANCE
CARRY
CHOOSE
CLEAN
CONSCIOUS
CONTACT
DAILY
EFFORT
EMOTIONAL
EMPATHY
ENSURE
FAITH
FOUNDATION
FREE
GLIMPSE
GOD
GROWTH
HELP
IMPROVE
KNOWLEDGE

LEARN
MAINTIAN
MEDITATION
OPEN
PEACE
POWER
PRACTICE
PRAYER
PRINCIPLE
PROGRAM
RECOVERY
RESULT
SERENITY
SOUGHT
SPIRITUAL
STEP
STRENGTH
SURRENDER
THANKS
UNDERSTOOD
WILL
WORKS

All of the words are taken from Step Eleven in the Basic Text pages 43-47

Food
for
Thought

Concept Twelve
In keeping with the spiritual nature of Narcotics Anonymous,
our structure should always be one of service, never of government.
What is the difference between service and government?

What
do you
Think?

The next meeting of the Upper Cumberland Service Committee will be on August 17, 2008
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.
