

THE VOICE

THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on N.A. unity.
2. For our Group purpose there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience, our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.
4. Each Group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other Groups, or N.A., as a whole.
5. Each Group has but one primary purpose - to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.
6. An N.A. Group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the N.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every N.A. Group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our Service Centers may employ special workers.
9. N.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. N.A. has no opinion on outside issues; hence the N.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS. *BBBBBBBB*

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There is one principal difficulty that we at THE WORLD SERVICE OFFICE INC. face every year that also affects our day by day operations, this is the attempt to have an up-to-date directory and also a mailing and phone list that is as correct as possible for our members. We are adding to each copy of 'THE VOICE' a registration and/or up-date page for your use. Please send it back as soon as possible so that we can get out the WORLD DIRECTORY for you. Lack of correct addresses and phone numbers that we can reach have resulted in many packages being returned. In order to try to prevent not only the loss of the price of mailing but the return of the literature itself, we have been sending many packages First Class. This costs us much more than it ought to. We will have to continue to do this in the hope that as time goes on better communication (because of the up-dates) will emerge and some savings will result. We are asking for your prompt cooperation. It is imperative that we know where to direct some of our Twelfth Step calls throughout the world.

Jimmy

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In 'THE VOICE' we offer the experiences and viewpoints of N.A. members. Opinions are not those of N.A. as a whole nor does printing imply endorsement by 'THE VOICE' or Narcotics Anonymous. Contents Copyrighted.

C.A.R.E.N.A. 1979.

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A NEW BEGINNING



When Narcotics Anonymous started in Sioux City 2½ years ago, we met on Thursday nights at 8:30 in a side room of the Hawkeye Club. At first only a small group of people came. Airing our gripes, telling our drugalogues, and not really saying the good things we had gotten from our clean and sober living.

As a pioneer group, the chance to finally be able to talk to a group of people just like ourselves was heady medicine. We got power fever. No talk of booze and falling off bar stools. Just drugs and falling off bar stools. We couldn't decide whether to let drunkalogs into our N.A. meetings. We argued and quarreled among ourselves for months about the legality of alcohol as a chemical and its place among recovering drug addicts. Sometimes we used up the whole hour talking about it. I know I walked away from many of those early meetings feeling frustrated. But feeling exhilarated at the same time. Because we were doing something to bring a program of recovery to ourselves that would allow us to talk to another person who knew how it felt to stick a needle in his arm to get that wanted oblivion that only heroin could bring. Or the need to get out NOW to get that speed or those downers or that pot just so we could maintain our messed up lives. We wanted and needed a program where we could share these feelings and thoughts with another person who had been through similar experiences.

I don't know when it happened but all of a sudden we weren't arguing and quarreling anymore. We were talking about what our new life of clean and sober living was giving us. New serenity, friends who cared, and the ability to cope with any situation that arose without resorting to the sick safety of drugs. It was great! People were sharing their feelings

about mess-ups in their lives, about how good everything went that day, and about how grateful they were to be alive.

Our small little group in the side room of the Hawkeye Club grew until we had three meetings going on simultaneously on Thursday nights, and one on Monday nights. We have a regular attendance of roughly 50 members and more newcomers coming in almost every week. The program of Narcotics Anonymous has grown here, bigger than anyone had ever believed possible. I am grateful to the program of Narcotics Anonymous because everytime I walk into our Thursday and Monday N.A. meeting I am sure to be greeted with a smile by another grateful recovering drug addict who has benefited from this program.

When a fellow drug addict came up to me at school one day and said, "Hey, did you hear about the Hawkeye Club burning down?" I didn't believe him. I thought it was a rather sick way of telling a joke. But it was true, all I had to do was pick up that day's paper and see the wreckage of the place.

All that day I felt scared and out in the cold. I felt disoriented, like my own home had burned and I didn't know where to go. I worried about our Narcotics Anonymous meetings. Where would we meet? We couldn't just stop having them. Could we??! A friend called and told me the meetings had been temporarily moved to the Western Iowa Men's Residence on Thursday nights and 2711 Jones on Monday nights. I hated the idea. I didn't want our meetings at the men's halfway house, I wanted them at the Hawkeye Club.

Since reality is the name of the game I went somewhat hesitantly on Thursday night to the men's halfway house. It all felt so strange and disoriented. The same faces were there. The people I had grown to love and care for but the

room felt strange. Not like our room at the Hawkeye Club. As the meeting progressed, everyone started talking about how they felt about the burning of the Hawkeye Club. Fear, anger, confusion. As we talked I felt a warmth filling my insides, I felt a warm blanket being wrapped around all of us. We were no longer separate, scared people, we were whole again. Pulled together by the common bond of drug addiction. The faith in God, the program and each other had been restored. Everything felt right again. Even the room felt like we had been there all our lives. Even the burning of our regular, safe, secure and known meeting place could not wipe out all the love and fellowship I/we all have found in the N.A. program.

I am truly grateful that God made me the insecure scaredy-cat that I am or I would never have experienced the unity of peace and love I felt at that first meeting of N.A. at the men's halfway house.

(T.D. - Sioux City, Iowa)

PROJECTIONS

I came home today from my job. My mind was in an awful place. It seems that today I was caught up in projecting. To me projecting is not living one day at a time, but in a dream world. It happens to me when I'm trying to project what other people are thinking and then I lose faith. I have to remember that this is a form of fear and when it comes to fear, it has played a big part in my life. When it finally gets quiet inside then I remember all the adventures my Higher Power and I have gone through. By then my faith steps in which was given to me by using the steps and associating with members of Narcotics Anonymous.

P.E.P. - No. Hollywood, CA

Being of service to N.A. is without a doubt the most rewarding experience I've had since I've cleaned up. But if you tried to tell me that stuffing envelopes, collating papers, xeroxing, volunteering for phone lines, being a G.S.R., or working with other addicts would not only keep me clean but happy also, I might have thought you were misinformed or misjudging me as to the kind of person I really was. For me, there came a time in my sobriety when it was my turn to give it away and I never heeded to it. I hung on to being the lost newcomer, misdirected, forever seeking your approval and advice (trying to find the real me was what I used to call it). It didn't take long for me to realize that my method in trying to find the real me was slowly destroying me. Things suddenly came to a halt. I felt as if I had heard basically every kind of story I was going to hear, except on occasion I'd hear a real winner, but all in all I had been to enough meetings and bored enough silly with my soap opera life, yet something seemed to be missing.

Inventories on self became an extension of my plain as day obsession with myself. Addiction had taken its role and life seemed very repetitious and I identified tremendously with the vicious circle. Rarely had I thought of what I could do as a member of N.A. to carry the message. Never had I thought to volunteer my time. N.A. committees, business meetings, conferences, etc. were like a word I'd never heard and cared little about. I was still too busy working on me. I started to push myself to go to the Women's Stag in my area and I listened and eventually started sharing. People weren't coming up to me and stroking me with comforting words like they used to. Instead, one of my best friends told me to come to a P.R. meeting. What the hell is that? And what does that have to do with me? She told me about it and I agreed to go. I went thinking it might be a real

nice social event, but was I in for a surprise. Everyone was talking about Traditions. I put my two cents in about a Step and they just continued talking about Traditions. I was fuming. One thing I can't stand is feeling left out, not knowing what the hell everyone is talking about. I went home and started reading the Traditions. I stayed up way past midnight studying these Traditions. I was shocked and amazed at some of the things I was learning. I had never stopped to think that N.A. had so much to say about the importance of unity within the Group and our primary purpose as a Group. I kept reading. It was like opening up a whole new area. I was also amazed how misinformed I had been in what I thought N.A. was as a Group.

Before retiring I felt differently. I wasn't even tired. My enthusiasm was kicking off and I felt excitement, but couldn't quite pinpoint it. The next day I telephoned my girlfriend and I talked her head off. She just laughed and said, "See, I told ya." All of a sudden I realized that for a short period of time I had been disconnected from myself. And boy, believe me, what a relief. I mean, I really felt good. Needless to say, I was over at the meeting every week, listening and learning and eventually participating. I really felt a part of, and I felt like I was on a honeymoon all over again. Since then, I still have problems but I just don't have that much time to give them or sit still and think about them. There are times when I even get a bit fanatical about certain areas, but I love it. What can I say? I have learned many things about being of service and I know I will continue to do so.

One important thing I am learning is Principles before Personalities. I have had to learn the hard way about friendship and what it really means. On occasion, I have disagreed with some of my dearest friends and our relationship sometimes hung by a thread. But today, I am learning

how to let people have their own interpretation of Principles before Personalities, and that just because they are my friends doesn't mean they should always agree with me. There's always something to be involved in, nothing ever seems to be finished. It's never-ending really. But I feel good today and very much a member of N.A. And today when I hear someone talking about being bored or depressed I ask them to come to a meeting with me. True, a lot of them haven't gotten there yet and many times they decline. But I know eventually I will see them in a business meeting or at a conference and we will both be sharing what we are learning. I have also had the pleasure of meeting members from all over this country who are of service, who care, who want to see N.A. expand all over the world. I had the honor of having a guy from Milwaukee stay with us who was here for the World Service Conference. It was just a beautiful experience hearing him share with us about his Groups and members. I am so grateful for this program. I thoroughly enjoy being clean and sober and very proud to be a member of this fellowship. I hope to see all of you at the next W.S.C.

(F.F. - San Fernando Valley, CA)

MAN! WHAT A HIGHER POWER. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

The Malaysian Golf Association admitted that it had hired a witch doctor to keep away rain during the four day Open Golf Championship held in Kuala Lumpur. The witch doctor did his job. Torrential rains fell in various parts of the city during the tourney, but none fell on the golf course until the event had ended. A.P.

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LUCK is God's nickname.

Roger Miller.

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CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE OF "THE VOICE"

Second Step...

"We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."

If you can accept the fact that a large number of drug dependent people were, like yourself, unable to control their own lives and that they have, through Narcotics Anonymous, found a way to live safe and sober, you have only to believe that you see and experience to complete Step 2.

N.A. has many members. Their Power--collectively, is certainly greater than that of any individual member. Surely, you realize that if your car gets stuck in the mud, and you can't get it out by yourself, you get help in the form of many hands or a large machine. What is impossible for one alone is often light work for many. So then, the many are a greater power than the one alone. You don't have to be religious to accept the idea of a power greater than yourself. Just take a look around with an open mind and you will see a positive power all around N.A. Call it love, call it harmony, call it peace, call it cleanness and soberness, call it good or call it God. It doesn't matter now what you call it. What matters is that you want to recover and by looking and listening as openly as you can, you find that N.A. seems to have the Power to help people recover.

You may be one of us who says, "I need help with my drug problem and I can see that N.A. has that alright; but that Second Step says this power greater than ourselves will "restore us to sanity" and I'm not crazy. I just can't handle drugs."

Many of us started out with that attitude. Let's look at our lives for just a minute. We have an incurable, progressive, terminal disease called drug addiction. It doesn't matter whether we "just take a few pills," fix eight times a day, suck on a pipe or drink bottles of cough remedy behind drug stores or have one tranquilizer with our first martini of each day--we have certain things in common no matter what kind or degree of addict we are.

First--our condition is incurable. Literally billions of dollars have been spent searching out a cure for drug addiction. So far, none has been found. N.A. has a way to arrest the disease--to stop it in its tracks--but nobody has come up with a cure.

Second--it's progressive. Over the long run, if we continue to use, we always get worse--never better.

Third--it's terminal. That means that if we continue to use, we die from it--one way or another. The autopsies will list accidental or intentional overdoses as drug related deaths. But think about it for a minute. If a wealthy lady gets one too many martinis on top of her doctor-prescribed tranquilizer and falls asleep at the wheel and kills herself or someone else, the statistics will call that death an automobile accident. But the truth is that drug abuse caused that death. If a junkie becomes depressed because of the tremendous burden of futility a junkie carries and hangs himself, the statistics will blame his death on a piece of rope. But heroin took him to the rope and kicked the chair away. And again, if a person really gets involved with one drug or another, to the point where he or she forgets to eat or is unable to eat for any length of time, that person becomes malnourished. That means, simply, they're

not getting enough of the right kinds of food necessary to maintain a healthy body. If this person then contracts some disease--virtually any disease, because of the weakened condition of his or her body, the body is often unable to fight the disease--especially those diseases which attack the liver or the blood. In many cases these people die, or their flu turns into pneumonia and then they die. Or their jaundice becomes liver failure and, as you probably know, when your liver fails--it's over. None of these will show up on the coroner's reports as death caused by drug addiction. But they are.

So, we have this disease: Progressive, incurable, terminal. And the most amazing single fact about the disease is that we went out and bought it on the time plan! That is insane. Think about that. You, I, everyone you meet in N.A., the junkie snatching purses on the street, the sweet ladies hitting two or three different doctors for their perfectly legal prescriptions. All of us have this one thing in common--we buy the disease that kills us and, one way or another, we usually pay for it with blood, sweat and tears and we continue to pay for it a balloon at a time or a few pills at a time or a bottle at a time until the day we die. That is at least part of the insanity of drug addiction. The price may seem worse for the junkie girl who prostitutes herself for her fix than it is for the wealthy woman who merely lies to her doctor but ultimately, both pay with their lives. Ask yourself this question: Do I believe that it would be insane to walk up to someone and say "Would you please sell me my own death--on the time plan?" Or-- "May I please have a heart attack or a fatal accident?" If you can agree that this would be an insane thing comparable to giving yourself an injection of deadly poison, only slower, you should have no trouble with the Second Step.

You can see that N.A. works, because you see the people it works for. You have admitted and accepted that you need help. That brings us to the Third Step. Will be cont'd.

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## NO PROBLEMS TODAY

Just this once O God I'd like to come to you with no problems, but simply say, "Thank You"...  
 For your forgiveness when I fail;  
 For the sheer joy of sleep, when I'm terribly tired;  
 For the strength of humility, when, pride overtakes me;  
 For the justice of your law, when men are cruel;  
 For the growing remedies to good health, when I am ill.  
 For the rightness of reasonableness, when I panic too quickly;  
 For the fun that refreshes, when everything gets too serious;  
 For the healing love of family, when friends hurt me;  
 For your presence when I am very lonely.  
 And above all God, I am thankful for the worthwhileness and fullness you have given to this world of ours.

-Anonymous-



OVERHEARD AT A MEETING...

"Stop trying to get even and start trying to get ahead."

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HELP AN ADDICT TODAY AND KEEP THE ILLNESS AWAY. ● ● ●



FEARFULLY \* \* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \* \* THE MEDIA

The building looked smaller than it looked on T.V. and much smaller than the large studios I see almost daily. when we parked in the rear, the wrought iron stairway was less fearfull than the front door. The short hall with small rooms seemed almost friendly and familiar, more so when I used the little family size bathroom. The moderator for the one hour radio presentation was extremely affable, though we were close to being late. I could feel times urgency and its importance to him in what was going on.

Up to now I was more or less taking things in my stride, after all didn't I know what I was doing, I knew all the basic things to watch out for; hadn't I seen others make mistakes and figured that most were due to lack of knowledge of the Traditions and also that combination of fear and ego that makes some (especially me) flippant or beligerant. I was beginning to have some second thoughts about my being there; however, things began to move fast and I had no time to dwell on my feelings of inadequacy.

Then we were quickly ushered into a room scarcely larger than the bathroon I had just been in, hurriedly introduced to the engineer who was surrounded, and I do mean surrounded, by electronic gear. I just knew then that I was on my own and that I was going to blow it as soon as I opened my mouth. I felt that as soon as the engineer produced a mike, I would grab it and spoil the whole thing. This was not making a tape that could be redone this was it --live--on the air.

One hour later all the thank you's were being said, it had gone well, no disasters, no anonymity breaks, no cussing, hardly any smart-alecky remarks but a deep appreciation for everything that had happened. The sharpness of the professionals, their understanding of direction in handling of incoming questions on the air and the speed with which they moved when things seemed to hang up here and there.

I felt that it was not just the other fellow member and myself who was trying to carry the message of recovery in N.A. but everyone who participated in that hour. I do believe that radio offers us one of the best ways to fullfill our purpose in carrying the Narcotics Anonymous message of recovery in towns and cities of all sizes throught the world. Los Angeles, Ca.

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SURRENDER TO LIFE. *do do do*

It seems strange that freedom is found in surrender. I grew up with a strong will to never be a quitter, never give up, never surrender; surrender is unthinkable. This was before and in the early stages of addiction. Even when I knew something was wrong with me I hung on to this old idea stronger than ever. That little dictator inside kept telling me; let these other people change, you're O.K., just do it another way and everything will turn out alright. It also told me, you're not really with it without drugs of some kind, you can't have fun, you have no confidence without drugs, but the main thing it told me that I didn't really listen to was, YOU CAN'T STOP USING, YOU CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT DRUGS. I didn't hear this because I didn't want to be controlled by anything or anybody. In the beginning, like many others, I figured I used for good reasons; I wanted to feel better, to act better, to feel more at ease in a world that awed me. It seemed to do this at first but in trying to recapture and increase that ease, dependence and addiction took over and progression set in.

Only when I hit spiritual bottom was I willing to listen and then slowly understand that surrender to life, as it is, is not defeat or humiliation but the beginning of spiritual growth and a resurgence of a positive and constructive rebellious spirit. Away that seeks the right and just way for me, in harmony with the choices I have to make. When I follow the N.A. Twelve Steps in daily practice, attend meetings and associate with friends there is no thought of drugs or escape or any of the other things that used to monotonously take all my time when the obsession dominated my life. Kay. CA.

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