

Tape 3  
Allentown Addathon 1990  
Letter from Doug F.( reading)

I am Eric; I would like to welcome everyone back. We are going to have a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer. Then we are going to open the meeting up and talk about the issues. God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference, just for today. I am going to turn the floor over to Lu and let him explain where we are at. This is Lu, exceptional reading skills (laughter). What I am going to be reading is a letter, inventory history that was written and sent on by somebody who could not be here today and hope you bear with me, because I am not the best reader. I am the one that got asked to do it and I have learned never to say no.

I sometimes think especially today about the reasons why addicts are the way they are. The way they treat each other and the way they feel toward each other even clean. When I first came into the fellowship, I experienced a lot of alienation, especially from the dope fiends. It was as if they really didn't understand who I was or where I had been, and it seemed that if one didn't shoot heroin, go to jail, shoot heroin, go to jail, add infinitum, one just didn't belong. There just did not seem to be room for anyone else. I am beginning to understand why they thought the way they did and I began to understand myself. Whenever you go to a meeting that is comprised of a lot of different people, you get a lot of different ways of thinking and expressing different thoughts. That is why this fellowship has grown the way that it has. We are getting people in who because of the nature of the drugs are recovering from their addiction much faster. If the very essence of narcotics was to be explored they are vastly different than other drugs, and the organization that bears that name in all reality probably should have dedicated itself to the cause of narcotics addiction as opposed to drug addiction. I can see today that the addict of long ago would not have joined the organization that you see today, but enough of them were here when the transition from narcotics addiction to addiction occurred that when created, did state that narcotics and sedation. I guess when Jimmy wrote it that seemed to suffice in the implication.

At any rate, the purpose of this paper is to explore the addict and the recovery setting and try to discover what is going on around Narcotics Anonymous. It is difficult because if you are an addict because it doesn't necessarily mean you understand addicts. I can only try to reconstruct things from what I have been able to gather from information that I have been given and what I see transpiring today. Not being clean in 1953, I have to reconstruct with some of the information that the foundry gave me. I have to say as acting sometimes biographer sometimes first person I will try to tie it together as best I can with the information that I have. In the final analysis you will have to be your own judge, I am all good conscience and with the guidance of my Higher Power, I will do my best to write the truth and hope that it will be received that way. I am motivated to write this because it is to me an inventory of sorts and I hope to be free of the information and make certain decisions for myself based on this. So in part, this is my personal experience I am sharing with you.

Narcotics Anonymous was the idea of a man by the name James P. Kinnon. I can use the full name now because he is no longer with us. He passed away July 9, 1985. NA started in homes in the San Fernando Valley that is California. These first meetings were called rabbit meetings because they were held in homes and jumped around a lot. Whoever had the meeting at their house next usually took the coffee pot and a box of green glass cups and saucers. This NA is not to be confused with the NA that had attempted to make a start a few years earlier in New York City as reported in the Salvation Army news article and is informed by a Jesuit priest

speaker at the 13th world convention of NA held in New York. There is a tape circulating around the fellowship with this story entitled "Junkie Priest". If ever an organization would want to dedicate itself to any individuals, it should be those few suffering addicts who tried and failed in New York because of no support, only hope. It boggles the mind that in a spiritual organization people can fight, take sides, discredit each other and honestly think that what they do is infallible, even to the point of destroying another one reputations and good standing in the community NA. When we have more than just hope, what we have is reality.

At any rate, what happened were the original members got together and met at what was then called the Roads Moorpark meeting. Almost from the beginning, there were problems, one being that Sy Malias who was one of the first AA's to support NA was discovered soliciting money from the LA County General Hospital, and the hospital was ready to pay it for 12 step calls. Jimmy found out about this and put a stop to it informing the hospital that we do not charge, we give this away free. Obviously, those in this very small organization at that time had their own opinions. In the final summation, Jimmy proved right. At approximately the same time another segments of addicts in the name of Narcotics Anonymous offered our services in Northern California for the purpose personal gain in the field of drug rehabilitation, I believe it was in Berkeley. Jimmy K once again met with the people at the university and told them that we do not sell this thing we give it away. This put the damper on those members' activities and stopped them from as Jimmy put it cutting a big fat pig in the ass (laughter) these two single activities along with some differences in basic philosophy in the organization caused what I shall call the north south rift. The basic elements in philosophy were that a couple of members wanted to maintain the steps as the AA version and saw no reason to expand the literature. AA's Book and 12 in 12 would be enough. For many years' addicts coming into the program were told to just add the word drugs to wherever the word alcohol appeared and keep on stepping.

When Jimmy first wrote and compiled the stories for the first little White Book, prior to that we only had a little yellow book, which was informationally lacking. There were still those who were opposing him for even doing that, AA's literature was good enough. I guess if you only knew that it would be good enough I think, at this point we have to remember that the fellowship and information that they had was not being related to by the addict at large. This organization was not being started for those addicts to meet who were making it in AA, but for those who were not. At any rate through dissention and discord, disharmony ensued and almost threatened to destroy any hope of NA ever developing the proper spirit to continue on. All the while Jimmy continued to have faith in his visions. He never gave up on the addict as so many others had done to us. When the fellowship was wanting and waning you could always find it in Jimmy's maple kitchen table. What he learned about recovery and relapse he learned first hand. When in a moment of jubilation he wrote, "We do Recover" he also experienced that. Although it was tough getting started in the early years consider he was only clean and sober three years he always had faith in his vision and his vision never failed him. As Jack Waley was to recall on tape years later, he would go down to Moorpark, see Jimmy K, a few loaded junkies, and he would go down there to carry his message. Jack died 18 years clean and sober, was a Trustee for many years and died playing handball of a heart attack.

Jimmy's vision came to him at a time when his life again became meaningless, when he began to question his own purpose for being as he was to relate years later a voice told me what I was to do. He never disclosed to anyone what that voice said, but those of us who were close to him never doubted it for a minute. His energy for service in this program was the kind of energy that could only come to one who was so inspired. Most of the text part of that pamphlet was written right down at the end of that table, as he was to recount to us in a meeting at Moorpark in which he was taking his 30-year cake. I can only guess at the feelings that must have come

to him as he blew out his candles. He always opened with his pitch. ,my name is Jimmy and I'm an addict, I am here because of so many that came before me and cant be here. I do not think that he ever thought that it was he that doeth the work. Even in relating about writing the pamphlet he merely said that much that was written was written "down at the end of that table". He never claimed any credit for himself he was a humble man, but at the same time with a strong healthy pride and sense of being, he was a Scotsman. Those of us that were fortunate enough to know him got to know an enduring love and a sense of compassion never experienced before. His dedication to NA was unfaltering and his love for this program unending. Even in the course of my own service, there have been times out of disappointment, disillusionment and imagined betrayal that I just walked away. Jimmy never did, he held to the beacon light always helping others to the goal. In the course of my service for many years in the WSO both as a helper stuffing envelopes and eventual vice president of the corporation it was he that first asked me to be in service, it was He that first asked me to get involved. I have to say that in all honesty left to my own devices I would have called sobriety a new car and he taught me what we were about, service. That the more recovery you get the more you had be ready to give it away, because if you do not you will not keep it anyway.

As the disease would have it, NA went through more transitions with some of the members leaving with resentments. The overview would have it that personalities tried to win out over principles, that group split off trying to take the Moorpark meeting with it, and some of the members eventually moved back to Northern California to start the NA that they understood. Amazingly enough there are still people who claim that NA started in Northern California, and I was three years clean myself I heard a woman at the Santa Rosa convention in Northern California stand up in front of the fellowship, raise her arms and tell them that she founded Narcotics Anonymous. Jimmy was present at that function and never spoke to anyone about it; I guess he figured it was not worth going into. After all that was a person along with a few others who had almost destroyed NA's chances of ever getting started. If she now wanted to take credit for the whole deal that was fine with him. All that I really know is that from inception to this very day we are still dealing with persons, attitudes and opinions from this original group that could not accept Narcotics Anonymous coming into being in its own way without AA literature or guidance. Many years later as the regional chairperson I was confronted many times with this issue, particularly in different areas of southern California that would determine to keep the Big Book of AA in their meetings and read from it. They made no small thing of this. People came to the regional meetings and raged at me for demanding that they remove those books from the meetings. I put it to the vote and this region back me in my stand. I always wondered after I had been to one of those meetings and saw each member with a book or books how they in their deepest imaginations could have considered themselves and NA Meeting.

[Top of the page](#)

At any rate, I informed them that in order to be considered to be apart of this region that the books would have to go or they should just call themselves an AA meeting. Oddly enough, most of those individuals from that area are the same people who are now on the other side of the coin and projecting this new fanaticism that we are experiencing in NA. I guess if you are a fanatic, any cause will do. Jimmy use to say that being a fanatic was part of spiritual growth and that as soon as you really knew what you were being a fanatic about you stopped being a fanatic.(laughter) We usually keep repeating something until we really know, I guess some people never outgrow that insecurity. It boggles the mind and sometimes I use to think to myself I am really glad that I don't have to see all of this through Jimmy's eyes. At that time, he had about 25 years clean and I guess he had witnessed all of this, the resurgence the repetition of all the nonsense for many years. I think the only thing that he use to ask himself

was when are they going to stop arguing and come into the office and do some work. We have always had talkers in NA but very few who just quietly did the work.

At that time in NA History there were no titles to get, only service to render, and most of it was done on the back porch of a mans home. The preceding three attempts at having the office in a rented place had failed through lack of service, lack of interest and lack of Narcotics Anonymous. The last was above a Bail Bondsman Office in Van Nuys California. When Jimmy took it back into his home again there were boxes of orders, opened envelopes, but no checks, apparently they used the money to pay the rent but never filled the orders and no literature, a sad state of affairs to say the least. This was between 75 and 76, prior to that the office was in a mans trunk, not exactly accessible to the fellowship. I don't remember how long it was in that state, Bob B would know it was his car. It was not easy for Jimmy to put it back together but it was easier in 65 ten years earlier. He sat at the Moorpark meeting with only one other member; Sylvia Wexler and she ask what he thought they should do. He looked at the little box of literature and said we will go on. This time at least there was a good start of a fellowship that extended itself to a few meetings in Phoenix, Arizona.

I remember when I first came into NA in 1972 at that time there were only four meetings in Southern California. I went to a meeting at that time in San Francisco and had to open it up because the secretary was not there. It was myself, another clean person, four loaded musicians and a girl who wasn't sure if she was an addict or not. This was the state of affairs when Jimmy took over. The addict with his traditional attitude of I have mine, the addicts did not care if NA ever got out of the San Fernando Valley. Of course, at that time most addicts were going to AA and if the truth were really told not a lot of really made it. The real break for NA came and for the addict to when a man by the name of Bill Beck founded two recovery houses. One in Pasadena called Impact and the other in Sun Valley called Cry Help. Enough addicts came out of these places with a good enough understanding of the program that they stayed clean and the fellowship was to finally have a group of members that got their sobriety via NA and members of NA. I was in that first group that stayed for 9 months, went back out into society and had found it unnecessary for fourteen years to take and mind altering chemicals. Jimmy use to drop by once a day and visit and once a week he conducted a step study. He was a very strong motivating force for all of us. I was especially impressed with 23 years clean.

A couple years later, I asked him to be my sponsor and his reply was I would rather be your friend. I always valued that friendship, through the years we exchanged a lot of things some of them I am sure I have yet to realize. Well anyway, an office had to be put together and somehow fill the orders that were past due. At that time, all he had was a Social Security check so he threw that in the pot and the literature was ordered. Eventually he caught up with it all and NA was now on its way again. His phone use to ring twenty-four hours a day people calling from all over the country. It was safe to say that every existing region had its very first contact with Jimmy K. He was more than just an office worker or contact for NA he was a friend. The personal touch that he gave people was probably a very strong inspiration for many. He use to tell me, if that phone would ever just stop ringing maybe I could just get organized and get something stuff done around here. He often did his work in early morning hours, because that was the only time that he could work undisturbed. During this time, he was also in pain. His legs bothered him constantly. He had emphysema and added heart circulation problem coupled with deteriorating discs in his back, causing him to loose quite a bit of sleep. In that way, the office being in his home was a blessing. When he could not sleep he could always write a letter to some other part of the country and at least give someone else some hope. I noticed something about him that was followed through in my life; it seemed that whenever he needed

that was when he gave the most, in giving he received so much.

I remember him telling me sometimes about himself, about a couple of years prior to our meeting when he had tuberculosis and was in the hospital and was losing his ability to speak. He told his Higher Power that if he would just give him his voice back that he would for the rest of his life talk about Narcotics Anonymous. He was true to his word. When he was in the hospital, he carved the first NA Symbol out into a piece of leather. He said to me that he rarely thought about anything else and getting to a meeting.

It was a little later that I finally got into service. It was great going over to Jimmy's house and mailing literature and reading some of the letters that came in from all over the country. For an organization that did not advertise, NA sure caught on like a house of fire. For a few years, I use to hope from New York because that was the last place I used before coming to California. The letters just kept coming and from them came a reaching out and an effort to addicts that had never been paralleled. One man with the help of a few addicts finally had the opportunity to realize his vision and dream. The lesson here I guess is to just plug along long enough and in Gods time all things come into being. I know that he desired nothing else in the world, he was not a man that was ever impressed by the material world he was a practical man who just believed in planning things out and getting the job done. He use to say to me if it ain't practical, it ain't spiritual, his feet firmly on the ground much like facing a bulldog. If you were not entirely straightforward with the man, he had little use for you. More than once I heard him say to members that were being elusive, when you are ready to come clean then I will talk to you. If it was not about the work, or service or the program, he had little use for the conversation. To my knowledge, he never as long as I knew him ever hurt another human being but I am sure along the way he did hurt a few feelings. He was a no nonsense kind of man and anyone that ever dealt with him personally would tell you that.

I think the most difficult time that we had in the WSO was when a person by the name of Bo S came to one of our conferences with a rough draft of what he called the Book. Everyone was so enamored at the possibility of NA finally getting a book that they were convinced by the way that he spoke that he was indeed the chosen person to do it and the conference did in fact institute a committee giving him full charge and their well wishes. When I first met this man, he claimed to have this mission for NA based on the fact that he had been the speed connection for all of Atlanta Georgia. This was the only way that he could make his amends. He showed me the rough draft that he had that was a Xerox copy with a big light block through the center of every page making it impossible to read. I thought at the time that he was either a hustler or a crazy person. Years later, I hold the opinion that he was both.

A year later he came back to the next conference with four file cabinets full of what a girl that was with him told me was the book. Based on her sincerity and my association with her, Shirley C from Atlanta, I agreed to work with the committee. Being a New York kid I was not easily convinced so I ask if they would mind if we in California Xeroxed what they had and jointly shared and edited the information. They agreed, that year I became part of the Literature Committee. I had the title of Literature Committee Chairperson. Bo and Shirley left after the conference and did not contact me for the rest of the year. We went to a place to Xerox all of this great stuff and I realized and I told them that the majority of what they had belonged to other people, articles, medical studies and psychologist opinions and papers and that this was not in anyway a making of a book. In fact I think that out of all that I reviewed there were but twenty some odd pages that were somewhat original and could be a start of a book. Bo was somewhat discouraged and assured me that this psychologist was a friend of his and that he could get his permission to use all the material. I told him that it was not applicable to our book

that he would have to canvas the fellowship for original material and it was left at that.

About then many things started happening that made my tenure and everyone else is very difficult. I don't know how to explain it or how it started I think that I probably don't know as much about it as I wish that I did and maybe in the future all the facts will be known, I can only write what I know. The year was 1980 and all hell broke loose. It was during my work as chairman of the Southern California RSC that many things started occurring. I had requested \$1000.00 for the WSO so we could put first and last months rent on a building that we had located. The decision was made to move the office out of Jimmy's home because there were rumbling that the issue might be brought up at the next conference, which was only a few months away. There was talk that they might want to move it to Georgia. We calculated with so much hullabaloo going on about all the work that they were doing on the book that they probably could have requested anything and got it. At any rate, I requested the \$1000.00 from the region. At that, time they had \$7800.00 in various checking accounts for various committees, which they claimed, was prudent reserve but in spite of all that, the area reps from all areas voted yes. They were very enthusiastic about the idea.

[Top of the page](#)

Many members at the time were very concerned with the fellowship growing at the rate it was that we should have something more to show than Jimmy's back porch. As the chairman, I called the treasurer and requested the check. Simple procedure yes, complicated process. She said she would meet me the next evening at the dance with the check, she did not show up. I called her and she agreed to meet me again, I felt that I was being stalled. She met me, refused to write a check, and said that I should call the chairman of the Board of Trustees. He told me that I should wait until the next conference to move the office and that I had no right soliciting the money for my committee. I took this back to the regional committee and I debated the issue until we had won. The treasurer resigned and I fired off a letter to the Board of Trustees demanding to know why they were trying to control my committee. Much transpired and the details are too numerous to list here the crux of it went something like this, calls were made to every region were made from the Board of Trustees outside of Southern California asking them to freeze any money that they intended to send the WSO until after the conference. Literature orders dropped drastically and we were informed that somewhere pamphlets were being produced without our knowledge and distributed all over the mid to southern southeastern regions. I can only posit a theory that is that some of the money earmarked for the literature committee ended up in this undertaking. Well the office was moved and we received enough orders to keep on going. I have to add at this time that a lot of areas ordered large orders and never paid for them. We seem to be under fire and just could not figure out where it was coming from. A task that started out as love and service was ending up in a war. It became apparent after a short period what was going on. Again the events are so complex and too numerous to list here. The meetings of the 80- 81 conference bear most of it out on the surface. The rest does not leave much to his imagination.

Out of the last literature conferences that were held in Southern California came the joining together of two groups of people. One the new NA or greater NA as they would later blatantly refer to themselves and another group of people were the friends and sponsees of a few people who still had an axe to grind with Jimmy over issues that were now almost over two decades old. These same people who had been involved in the original NA rift between Northern and Southern California were now re-emerging in the form of people they sponsored; they rarely came out front but were always close by. I was to realize that in my short time around I too was to be considered their enemy. Wasn't it I who had made them take the AA books out of our NA Meetings? I guess when I threw in with Jimmy K that there was a lot that I was to

understand for me personally. I was also among along with his friendship to inherit his enemies. He never made any bones about it, he told me everything. I went in with my eyes open, just took this warning about certain people as truth, and just did the best I could. I never realized how much power that hate and resentment have until this juncture in my life.

At this point and time the literature committee which had never really been very communicative with the office anywhere showed up at the next conference with a printed and copyrighted copy of what they called our book and requested that we print it immediately. I remember the chairman for the Board of Trustees came over to Jimmy's house and told him that he thought it was a beautiful piece of work and that we should publish it as is immediately. What they had was not the book and was they had and was to undergo many changes over a period of three years until it became somewhat readable, free of plagiarisms and redundancies and at least qualifiable to be called our basic text. I can only surmise from the events that happened that somewhere a plan was devised to publish the book, move the conference, move the office and remove Jimmy from the new NA or greater NA as they referred to themselves. At that time, all indications pointed toward a split in the fellowship. If this group of individuals now united within and outside of the state did not get their way. Jimmy went to the lawyers and closed the corporation to keep it from being penetrated by these factions who were becoming more vocal and starting to surface everywhere especially at the conference.

I want to give a very special recognition to Bob B. of the Board of Trustees, one can duly note in the minutes along with Bill B. who constantly reminded these individuals one the conference floor that the WSO was a outside issue and a separate entity that had the same autonomy and right as any other committee represented there. It would take the faction another two years to figure out how to get around that. For the meantime we were able to hold the line and secure the home fronts so that Narcotics Anonymous would not be taken over by a group pf addicts who were proving to us that they were fast becoming self serving and treated the traditions like they were there for them and only them to interpret. If you voiced a different opinion, you were accused of disunity, stirring the pot if you will. It was not long before that the discrediting of the WSO began to occur. There were slurs about people not getting the literature ordered letters not answered and talk and accusations about the members in the office using the phones to propagandize. I wondered what kind of organization I was apart of and for that matter what country I was living in It was very clear that this coalition and that included many of the Board of Trustees there is still a few around today would do anything within its power to further its ends. The slurs were endless, I still hear them today. A girl from Florida recently asked me if I had burned all the records in the WSO. The rumors persist that I am just a guy from California who use to work in office and has resentment because he was thrown out. The tactics that these people used are abhorrent and as Jimmy use to say reprehensible. In May of '81, he gave me his personal resignation to deliver to the conference and read. It was one of the saddest days of my life. I felt that if he was leaving the Board of Trustees who could you trust. I have in the course of service in NA had many points of disillusionment. This was one of the greatest," due to the unconscionable actions of some members of the Board of Trustees on a personal level and the mistrust, division and disunity engendered by the same within the fellowship I submit my resignation on this date, April 27, 1981". His resignation was then followed by Bill B. His statement in short reads, I hereby resign as a member of the Board of Trustees because I refuse to do business with deceit and dishonesty that more or less summed it up. The Chairman of the Board stated that he would gladly accept Bill's resignation on whatever conditions he placed it. He was later to lull the conference to sleep by stating after re-nominating Jimmy back to the board that he was sure that Jimmy would come back to his senses and come back to the board. He further stated to quell any thoughts about the board that Jimmy was to NA as Bill W was to AA and that no one had gone out of their way to hurt him. All they wanted to do was steal his dream and take it to Atlanta. As Bo was once overheard saying by the secretary of the conference and myself , we didn't want to hear about those people driving Cadillac's out in

California after this book is published. He further stated which I think is very solicitous of him that Jimmy is of his right mind and in good health that he had just met with him this morning and he was all right. The rumor was along with other slurs that he was senile and he could not listen to reason.

All that I can tell you about this part of service or the business of NA is that daily a devastating experience. As each day opened, there were more rumors and more innuendos. Jimmy took the position that we would answer none of it. Just keep our heads down and do the work. I do not think to this day that many people really know the whole truth that is besides the people who spread the lies to begin with. The lies that were spread not only hurt Jimmy and the people in the office but the addicts themselves, NA as a whole. I was the main speaker at the 12th World Convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. After I got off the podium a young girl fell at my feet crying, please let them print the book, why do not you let them print the book. She told me that her brother had OD'd a few weeks before and that if she had had the book she could have saved his life. I felt so sorry for her and in trying to comfort her; I forgot to ask her where she had gotten that information. It was very bizarre, a throng of people were standing in line to thank me and an accuser hangs on my legs crying like I was Napoleon responsible for the life and death of a civilization. A similar experience happened to Jimmy K in New York after he appeared at the 13th World Convention. An accuser stopped him and asked him what the fuck he did with the money from the book Referring that the money raised by the fellowship for the book that was lost in a bankruptcy by the printing firm that we contracted to print it. It is not long before that these individuals some Board of Trustees and others put together an AdHoc committee through the conference in 1982 to as they put it; get to the bottom of things. If a frontal assault did not work, I guess they would go through the bottom. They gathered up a report of complaints at the time that they felt would be satisfactory to dismiss our board all in the name of unity and Sally E. was at the forefront of that movement. In the course of that conference, a select committee was appointed to deal with this issue behind closed doors. This was a last minute decision, which they came about through my informing them that I too had a report. Mine dealt with the breaking of Traditions by the Board of Trustees. Not just a few letters not getting mailed without going into the infinite of what went down in this committee of who said what to whom I will take special note that James D. Newly elected board member upon leaving after I was in the process of reading my report exclaiming I want to get out of here I think I am going to throw up. I am sure that the recounting of this story he will say that he had the flu that day. If you know anyone long enough probably, everyone changes their story. At any rate, the rest is history.

[Top of the page](#)

As far as me leaving the office, it was precipitated by the standing board and the newly elected board to the WSO. I came to work at the office one day and one of the volunteers came up to me and told me that there had been some changes. The WSO board had met and elected a new president, this being new to me I further inquired. It seemed that the board had an emergency meeting called by the president Phil P. and that he had resigned last night and had nominated a new president who was elected. The new president was Chuck G. This to me was the most vicious cut of all. I was the vice president of a non-profit organization duly elected to that board with a legal responsibility and was not even called to an emergency meeting or present at the election of a new president. To say that I felt slid is to understate it. I felt humiliated, deceived and betrayed. I called the lawyer for the corporation and asked him what recourse I had. This was an obvious error, like calling your wives lawyer during a divorce (laughter). He told me that he did not see any recourse that I had and said frankly to me that he had never encountered a situation like this before and agreed with me that it was a very unusual thing to happen for a non-profit organization. He could not figure what the gain was in the move; I was



all too familiar with the move. I had seen it used before in the case of Bill B. It had cost him the two recovery houses he had founded, in both cases discrediting information was first circulated then the bounce. I think that this is called character assassination. A sad commentary on a great career that a man embarks upon only to be cheated out of it when he reached the goal. No unlike what happened to Jimmy. There are many in this fellowship that should be searching their conscience about what they said and did to these men. Many of the individuals involved were the same people in both cases.

I am not asking anyone to do that for me because what was done to me did not destroy my life livelihood or dreams, it only hurt my feelings. It made me grow up a little faster than I would have chosen to and prompted me to write these things. The thing that I have been taught and learned it well is to write. Jimmy had signed off the corporation a year prior to all the eventual power struggles. I guess he saw the writing on the wall. At the time of my resignation, Jimmy was working as the office manager having demoted himself from director and president of the corporation to office manager and was happy to just make sure that the day-to-day work went smoothly. By the next conference with no one there to really protest, they voted him out and elected a new office manager. I often wondered what the threat was with him just being there overseeing the work and sharing the legacy of his program with the newer members. He was a man who could accept change he would have been happy to do it. After all, wasn't the new office manager called the executive director? Would there have been enough room in this organization to let him just stay or come in a few days a week. What I guess I am really asking is don't these people have any respect. Was the hunger for power so great that all power even personal power of a single man had to go? Was the vendetta so deep that all that got in its way had to be vanquished? Was not there just a little room still left in anyone's heart for the founder of Narcotics Anonymous. Yes founder, conceiver, and worker among workers, first committed and last to leave.

Until recently, I always had those questions in my mind. Recently I had them all answered for me. First, they changed one word back to the way AA says it which was my first indication that the old guard was back. "These" instead of "those", those indicating the 11 steps that precede the 12th step, which is a result of those 11 steps, we had a spiritual awakening, which makes perfect sense to me. It also made perfect sense to the man who was inspired to make that change in 1953 along with adding "We" before each step and changing alcohol to addiction. A few simple changes that significantly changed the lives of thousands of people now a worldwide endeavor. But now 35 years later we are told that steps the way they use to be were not good enough. I only wonder if these individuals get away with this, what will they do next. They send around the changes to meeting along with the message to stop using certain words that it is bad for newcomers and 20 newcomers disappear out of our Hollywood meetings, and the beat goes on. Where is it going to end? When I went to start petitions to stop the power madness by certain members of the fellowship who are not happy that they have all the positions of power in the organization. They get free plane trips all over the world, free hotel and meals, ambassadors to the unknown is what they should be calling themselves (laughter). Apparently, all the public adulation, all the freebies just are not enough. They now want to revise the literature and change the steps. Tell everyone how to talk and just generally run our lives, spiritual programs and control what we read protect us from words that might have something to do with sanity. What is all this bullshit about?

Now I know why they wanted for Jimmy to disappear, he was the only sane person left that they had to reckon with. He was the only one that would have told them they were crazy. I mean all right if we are all crazy because no one will know the difference. Now if we can just convince everyone else that we are sane and they are crazy then we will be all right. This is a group of lunatics. To change any part of this program or the steps is like going to Ford Motor

Company and telling them to re-design their engine because it does not work. To get back to reality, pardon my trip, when all this stuff came down at the last conference I was about as confused and unknowledgeable as anyone else. It has taken me several weeks to just comprehend information that I have and to reconstruct with help of conference participants what went on at that great gathering where that group of addicts got together to one more time save all of our lives.

It seems that according a member from England, I could not find anyone far enough a way from the problem or without the usual religious fanatical Ferber to talk about it. They offered us the changes to vote on we voted against them, so they tried to find a more palatable way of coming at us with them so that they could get the desired yes vote. When they did not get the yes vote, they went into an ad-hoc committee to discuss them. After five days, they finally got their way and we went home. If you remove, the twelve votes that the Board of Trustees hold they seem to be voting in mass according to the minutes of the conference you would not have been able to get those changes through. I do not blame them for voting for change after all they did change the literature that they were asking everyone to cooperate with and vote on. They made those changes regardless of historical content or continuity or spirit of the literature that they violated. I feel like someone had torn up a Bible in front of me and I have to grin and bear it and work my perfect program. Well folks guess what I am not like a lot of you. I don't have to look good all the time. As far as what you say about me, I don't really care. When you discredit ten years of service and hard work in this organization by just summarizing my whole service career with "He is just a guy that we kicked out of the office and now he has resentment", it really doesn't matter. I saw how you treated my best friend and what you said about him and I would consider it an honor if you would treat me the same way. (laughter) I will promise you one thing though no matter what you say in your rebuttal, no matter how dishonest you become I will not lie about you the way you lied about me. I would not betray and desert you the way you did to me. I would not alienate you from your fellows and reject you as a human being because of what you think. I will not judge you in private and say other when I see your face. You can say whatever you want to at any meeting that I attend and I won't pull you aside afterward and defile and violate your being by telling you the words that I don't want to hear you say. Because I live in America and I am a member of Narcotics Anonymous and was told by an old man that I could be anything that I had to be until I discovered who I really was. I learned recovery the right way, the free way where conditions were non-existent. What I was offered when I got here was love and along with it a responsibility which was offered to me unconditionally and would always be available to those who came after me. I know that I could turn and walk away. God know what my involvement in the past has cost me but maybe today it might just be a little different. After all aren't I still an addict. Maybe this time it will be different and people will care when I tell them what I know and how I feel. Maybe a few addicts like myself will take courage and move ahead to our proper places as concerned members of Narcotics Anonymous who can accept that there is no such thing as a recovered addict. That there are no musts in NA does not exist anymore, that we have no leaders it has been eliminated. That this program is no longer a suggested program. That's it from Doug F.

[Top of the page](#)|[Home](#)|[Back to Fellowship history](#)