

THE

REUNION

CONFECTION

HOW IT WORKS

If you want what we have to offer, and are willing to make the effort to get it, then you are ready to take certain steps. These are suggested only, but they are the principles that made our recovery possible.

1. We admitted that we were powerless over our addiction, that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. We continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us, and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of those steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

This sounds like a big order, and we can't do it all at once, we didn't become addicted in one day, so remember — EASY DOES IT.

THE RAINBOW CONNECTION

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INDIVIDUAL OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THIS
NEWSLETTER DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THOSE
OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS AS A WHOLE.

Story of the Month:

R E S C U E D

I was on a ship one day and the ship sank. It doesn't matter whether I was captain of the ship, or just a deck hand. It's not important if I was up in the crow's nest or down in the boiler room. The fact remains that my ship sank and I was doomed.

Just when I felt hopeless and didn't have any will to live, I saw a lifeboat rowing toward me. I know this may sound insane, but I didn't want to get into the boat. The piece of wood that I was holding onto wasn't much, but it was all that I had.

The people in the lifeboat pulled me in anyway, because I didn't have much fight left. They took me to an island and said that I could stay there for as long as I was willing to do twelve things. At the time, I didn't know what they meant, but it seemed like a nice place. Everyone was happy and smiling. Since I didn't have anywhere else to go, I chose to stay. I also noticed that around this island there were twelve sentry towers. I was told that the sentry towers were there to protect us from forces that were on the island and to protect us from forces outside the island. They told me that if I worked hard and learned the twelve things to do on the island, and tried to live by them to the best of my ability, a day at a time, I could get better. I was also told that I must learn the twelve sentry posts and live within their boundry so that island would always be there for any shipwrecked

person who wanted to stay. They told me that if I did these things, maybe one day I too could become well enough to venture out in a lifeboat and bring hope to some shipwrecked person.

My name is Bruce and I'm an addict. The ship which I just described to you was my life. The sea in which it sank into was reality. The lifeboat was the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. The island they took me to was called Recovery. The twelve things that I had to be willing to do in order to stay on the island of Recovery were the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous. The twelve sentry posts that guard this island of Recovery from internal and external forces are the Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous. These two things mean everything to me today, because they are my life.

The Twelve Steps of NA saved my life, and the Twelve Traditions insure that I always have a place to go when I need to talk to another addict.

I made a mess of my life because I was unable to deal with reality on its terms. I chose to escape using many means. The vehicle which I chose that got me here was drugs of one sort or another. The use of drugs took me to the point of feeling hopeless, helpless and less than human. I really wanted to die, but I didn't have the courage to kill myself. I just wanted to quit hurting, but didn't know how. It seemed as though everything that I did went sour. I felt like a failure and very inferior. I felt unaccepted and unacceptable.

The Fellowship of NA was hard for me, because I was very much afraid. The people in the Fellowship helped me to understand that I suffer from a disease --not a moral dilemma--and that made it a little easier. They told me that if I wanted to stay free of all chemicals, that I must surrender to the fact that I was powerless over my addiction and that my life had become unmanagable. I also learned that since I had a disease, I could recover.

For me today, my recovery from the incurable disease of addiction is the active change of my ideas and attitudes--through abstinence. The only way that I am able to actively change is through trying to live the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous in my daily life to the best of my ability. The only way that I can live the Twelve Steps of NA is to go to meetings regularly and not take that first fix, pill or drink. The meetings provide an atmosphere of recovery and a place for identification. I feel total acceptance today when I walk into an NA meeting. Today I have come to know unconditional love.

The Twelve Traditions insure that an atmosphere of recovery and a place for identification will always remain. The Twelve Traditions keep our meetings free. Without the Traditions the group fails; without the group, the addict dies.

I am very grateful to the NA program for teaching me how to love, laugh and finally, for giving me a life and teaching me how to live it. I can only express my gratitude for my recovery

through selfless service--anywhere,
anytime, anyway.

--Bruce C.
Steubenville, OH

OOOOH, YEH!!

There are people all over the world dying because of their various addictions. Very few fortunate people ever make it to an NA meeting. I sometimes take it for granted, until I realize how many years I went without knowing the message of recovery was here in Narcotics Anonymous. I am so grateful --I could never do enough work to match the gratitude I have. I'm glad to know that, too.

Today, I like myself and my life. I have no reasons to be critical, just good reasons to continue growing and seeking recovery. Number One: I'm a sick person and spiritual healthiness is the answer to that great void I never could fill. I could write number two and go to umpteen twillion possibly, but it's not necessary. I have found a way to recover, but being well is not my goal.

Feeling love and being close to God are what I like most about this new way of life. I'm not a "born again" anything; I'm an "alive again" addict, dedicated to help others know they need not die a miserable, lonely death like so many others did before us. I pray for the sick addicts that may one day be those who carry our message to another suffering spirit.

--Scooby
Memphis, TN



NA GEORGIA REGIONAL SERVICE COMMITTEE REPORT

(The following report was prepared for the 1982 World Service Conference of Narcotics Anonymous.)

There has been more growth in our area, as far as service committees are concerned, than at any time in our history. Last year in May we had two ASCs within our region. Today we have six--one as new as 10 days old. Most of our population is still centered in metro-Atlanta, with Birmingham, Decatur, Mobile, Savannah, Macon, Montgomery, Tuscaloosa and Gadsden growing like wildfire.

The appoximate size of our Fellowship within both states is 100 meetings and 900 population. Ain't that some shit! We didn't think that was possible just a year ago.

The biggest event that went down in our region this year was a Regional Convention in February. All total we had 456 registrations. The people came from 17 states. The fellowship was great and a lot of local people got to see some of the NA picture that they had not got to see before.

The next event was our Annual Mini-Convention in Panama City, Florida. This year we had 249 registrations from nine different states. We have already booked the same hotel for the third weekend in May 1983.

Our Hospitale and Institutions activities have not yet been actually organized. We have a lot (35-40) meetings that are in hospitals and institutions. Three of these are

actual H&I meetings in metro Atlanta.

We have had an answering service "Hot Line" since the winter of 1980. As time has passed and our Fellowship grown, so has the importance of the answering service. Local television stations are now running Public Service Announcements giving the "Hot Line" telephone number (404-875-3995) and the response has been good.

Some of the activities we've held to raise \$595 to send me (RSR) and my alternate RSR, Elliott H., to this World Service Conference are mud wrestling, pie-in-the-face contests and a day in the park picnic, which helped to build unity and support as well. I personally chose to be in on the mud wrestling and if you've never been in on one, you ought to try it just once! Fair warning--it won't be like you think it will be!

We have had other activities besides this type, such as Trusted Servants workshops, dances to raise money for the RAINBOW CONNECTION, dances just for fun and to help celebrate our clubhouses' birthdays, our annual Halloween Dance and our annual dance to raise money to send to the World Service Conference.

The clubhouses in our region serve a need for us of NA that we can't get anywhere else. Believe me, we tried. Several of the local hospitals bus their patients in once a week for a meeting and fellowship.

To date we have three clubhouses in our region. The third has just opened its doors and the oldest known club-

house within the NA Fellowship, the Rising Sun, is over four years old.

Our biggest problem or situation is that in some of the outlying areas the groups still want to use AA literature in the meetings. The copy of the Board of Trustees meeting minutes that came with Volume 1, Number 2 of the World Service Fellowship Report has helped a great deal. It has also brought about a lot of questions from members but that has helped, or made, me do a better job. It is reassuring to me as RSR to know that the Board of Trustees is standing up for our Traditions. This helps me do the same. I see it as our Fellowing coming of age.

Plans for the coming year are to hold another convention in February or thereabouts. That question is out to the groups now and we are awaiting feedback. The Panama City trip is already being planned. Decatur, Alabama, is having an all-day state or regional rally to pull its groups together in hopes of forming its own region. This will be on June 19. Two bands, one country and one rock 'n' roll, will play and the registration is \$2. As for the rest -- who knows what God has in store for us!

--In Loving Service,
Motorcycle Ed



NINE MONTHS CLEAN

Today I had nine months clean!

Thank you, God. Thank you, my friends.

There have been so many times that I've had to call on God and my friends just to get me through the day. But day by day, my life is getting better. Today I honestly have faith and hope that things will work out.

The conscious contact I have developed with my Spirit really flips me out sometimes. I have certain times during the day set aside for prayer and meditation, but I try to keep a conscious contact going all the time. This has helped me to be happier with myself and the world. I am really learning to live and to enjoy life!

Today I was fortunate to make two meetings. My sponsor and a very special friend were there to give out the chips. I can't begin to express the love and happiness I feel. I never got rushes like this from any drugs!

Thanks to my Spirit and the Fellowship of NA, I'm looking forward to my first birthday.

--With much love,
Hiking

ANONYMOUS PRAYER

I do not ask to walk smooth paths,
nor to bear an easy load.
I pray for strength and fortitude
to climb the rock strewn road.
God, grant me such courage that I
can scale the highest peaks on
my way home and transform every
stumbling block into a stepping
stone!

"MY GRATITUDE SPEAKS WHEN I CARE AND
SHARE WITH OTHERS THE NA WAY"

This is such an important part of
my recovery I just had to write about
it.

Being loaded, I made no friends,
had no friends and truly felt I needed
no friends. Trust was a myth to me
and the only thing I believed in was
myself, which led to no avail.

Today in recovery I have learned
that through caring and sharing with
others, trust comes.

You are always there when I need
you, which is just another "dream come
true" since being clean in NA.

For the freedom I have gained through
my Hower Power, the Twelve Steps of Nar-
cotics Anonymous and your trust, bro-
thers and sisters, I am deeply grateful.

--Steve G.
Atlanta, GA

THE TRUTH HAS SET ME FREE

The truth is when I got here, lying
to myself had become a 24-hour-a-day
job and trying to buy my own insanity
was becoming more and more painful. I
had already resigned myself to the fact
I would always have to use, the pain of
"feeling" was just too much to bear.
You see, I had always ran from pain, got
loaded to escape pain, yet somehow I knew
I had to stop running.

Today I believe my Higher Power had
a whole lot to do with this idea filter-

ing into my closed mind because I stumbled into this fellowship. It was here I heard that I didn't have to use, that feelings never killed anyone, but dope was killing people every day. I saw a glimmer of hope and for the first time in a long time I didn't want to die.

It was then that I began to hear the truth; I am an addict, I am powerless over my addiction and my life is unmanagable; also there is a power greater than myself that is restoring me to sanity, slowly but surely. I can turn to that power I've come to know as God today and I will be taken care of. I "feel" feelings today without constantly judging them to be "bad" or "wrong." Feelings are simply a part of my emotional make-up and thanks to this Fellowship I'm growing up emotionally.

This program is the way for me and I know that life just wouldn't be the same "out there." I could never again lie to myself and believe it for very long. I claim my freedom today and thank Narcotics Anonymous and my Higher Power that I'm no longer a prisoner in that dungeon of despair, because the truth has set me free!

--Joy W.
Marietta, GA



ANY LENGTH



It has been said over, over, over and over again, "We must be willing to go to any and all lengths to maintain our sobriety and clean way of life." Personally, I believe this commitment is one of the most important that is to be made in my newly discovered way of life.

This program of Narcotics Anonymous with its Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, Fellowship, Giving, Receiving, Sharing and Caring and, most of all, Love and Life, is a mighty gift by far. However, there is a small catch and that catch is me as an individual. This program is mine if I choose it, this program is mine if I use it, this program is mine if I want it, work it and follow it.

I have a voice in this program because it was started for me, patterned after another successful program. Human beings started it, wrote it, help it be what it is, love it, cherish it, live by and because of it. Human beings and a new way of life are what this program, to me, is all about. Individuals started this program and keep it going. However, I personally believe that the original idea and credit must go to God!

I must continually work this program each and every day and night of my newly discovered "clean" life, because I know if I don't I'll go right back to my "old" way of life, which was emotional, spiritual and physical suicide.

Because of Narcotics Anonymous, today I have a choice and for me that's great. For before NA, I wasn't aware of a choice.

I said earlier that this program was started for me and I have a voice in it. This is very true, for you see, I am a "member" of Narcotics Anonymous. NA offers a new way of life to us addicts and it also offers the opportunity to make and accept certain commitments. To me one of the most important being, "Willingness to go to any lengths to maintain my sobriety and clean way of

Through and with the love of God, as
I understand Him,

--Big John
Smyrna, GA

ODE TO THE BOOGIE MAN

Fear, the Night watchman,
the Early bird,
awake after sleep
and up before dawn.

Fear, Haunting-Spectre Friend,
untimely visits happy moments,
shattering Peace like thinnest glass.

Fear, Realest Illusion,
Shadowing light,
turns the bright day
into fright-waking night.

Imaginary Demon
laughs at the faces
of the scared and the lonely,
laughs in the faces
of the helpless and small.

This Tyrant from nothing,
This most nothing of all,
is spun out of nightmare,
spun out of lies,
spun out of fabric
of elaborate disguise.

As real as the dreamers,
unreal as the dreams,
He's quite the fooler, it seems!

- Lee Jones, Selma

HOW TO HINT
Meeting Format Where Everyone Can Talk

- 1) Count the number of people in the room.
- 2) Divide the number into the amount of time you have.
- 3) Tell the group how much time each person will have to speak if everyone is to talk.
- 4) If someone rambles on for twice his/her time say, "Good to see you here, thanks for sharing. Let's hear from this man/woman now." Or comment on what they said, pointing out its virtue, thank him/her and move on to the next person.
- 5) When half of the time is up, tell the group how many people have talked in half the time.
- 6) At the end, after all have shared, ask if anyone else has anything more to say. Thank the group and let them applaud themselves on getting around to everyone.

This is true group consciousness.
Everyone feels the love and the group
is awake and alive with the love they
have for the suffering addict. Try
it -- it works!



--Anonymous

* * * * *

God, we thank thee for the night,
And for the pleasant morning light;
For rest and food and loving care,
and all that makes the world so fair.
Help us to do the things we should,
To be to others kind and good;
In all we do, in work and play,
To love Thee better day by day.

Amen

There is a difference between being awake and being conscious. Being awake is as simple as having your eyes open. Being conscious involves much more; an open mind, an open heart, a willingness to listen, and to hear.

This is a spiritual program. Here, we rely on the spirit to do for us what we could not do for ourselves. For that line of communication to be open we must establish conscious contact. There are many ways to do this; through prayer, meditation, daily reading of recovery oriented literature, and sharing. These are the things that are suggested in order to obtain this contact. How many times have we seen our old insanity creeping into our days, our self-will run-riot, controlling our every move, only to find that we did not pray that day. Self-will run-riot, insanity or insane thinking, and operating on old ideas are Signs of No Conscious Contact.

Many of us believe in beginning our day with the simple prayer of greeting to our Higher Power. We find this puts us in an open frame of mind to live - Just for Today.

Prayer is a must in conscious contact. An honest desire to communicate with our Higher Power is a necessity. We communicate with our Higher Power in hopes that we will receive communication in return. We must be patient and listen with our hearts. Cash register honesty is good and necessary, but open honesty, keeping our lives up front in our prayers should be done.

Trusting nothing or no one when we arrived in the N. A. Program, we would secretly try some of the things we heard in meetings, the Serenity Prayer, Let Go & Let God, One Day at a Time, etc. We began to trust others when we saw these things working in our lives. As our personal Program developed we began to see God working through others to help us in our recovery. Many of us see this as a part of our Conscious Contact.

In order to maintain our Conscious Contact, we must continue to be humble and daily reaffirm

our surrender to a Power greater than ourselves.

--Anonymi

THE INSANITY CAME BACK

Hi Everyone!

First, let me tell you how NA is going in New York--great! Meetings are popping up everywhere all the time. I'm involved right now in starting two new meetings, one in Queens and one in Nassau County. I celebrated my anniversary for being clean one year last month with two other people. It really felt good to be a part of the first big anniversary of NA here in New York. It's all very exciting and I am glad to be a part of it all!

I want to tell you a story about something that happened while I've been back here. Something that brought on a lot of gratitude for me. It also brought on some fear and a little shock.

I watched a person, an addict, die. I met her at one of the first meetings I made being back here. She was coming up on having three years clean. She gave me her phone number and I called her some when I first got back here. She helped me. I watched this lady change. I watched her stop going to meetings, sign herself into a psych ward, eat the pills the doctors gave her, until about a week and a half after she got out of the hospital, O.D. She killed herself.

The first time I saw her in the hospital, I was shocked. The extreme change in her was unbelievable. The insanity

that she let back into her life was so evident and outstanding, it scared the shit out of me. How could this lady who had stayed clean for three years let this disease take hold of her again?

I talked to her that first night in the hospital. I tried with all of my strength to get through to her. It just seemed like all her hope was gone. She felt that she had something and had lost it and now could never get it back. It hurt to look in her eyes and listen to her voice. The pain that she was going through was so fucking familiar! I wanted to shake her and just place in her being the faith and strength that I had. But, of course, that's impossible.

So, Debbie's gone. But, I'm here, and you're here. Thank your God that it wasn't me or you.

This really convinced me that I must be constant in my practicing the steps and principles of this program. Believe me, I'm trying. Of course, the old attitudes and habits come back here and there, but I don't have to act on my loneliness. I don't have to listen to my sometimes self-destructive mind. Thank God, I'm alive and clean today and I don't have to be alone.

Love you all and will see you soon.

--Lisa

P.S. Thanks for the two RAINBOW CONNECTIONS whoever sent them. I really enjoyed reading them!



THE COMMON DEMONINATOR

I read a letter today from a concerned NA member in Florida. It addresses certain group problems and procedures in a spirited and effective manner. It specified the problems without inspiring hatred or confusion. One part of the letter, however, seemed out of line. Members of the Literature Committee were singled out as troublemakers and worse, identified as representative of troublemakers Fellowship wide.

I would respectfully remind the Fellowship that a great many of you would not be here but for the literature and many of you could have gone back out but for something you read. The WSC Literature Committee has always had an open door policy and never excluded any NA member from attendance or participation. Neither has the committee ever exerted itself to direct or control the behavior or conduct of participating members. If there is a common bond among the fine folks who did the work resulting in our new literature, it is that the writing has made us think. Think about NA as a whole. Think about the Twelve Steps and Traditions and the recovery process in general. Inevitably, thinking results in change for the individual and the groups, so that recovery and relief from the disease of addiction is more generally available and solutions to the common problems now shared more easily than ever before.

The letter, like I said, was just great until it got to the part about literature. Then the writer, whom I love very much, got upset as is reflected

in the misquoting of the Fourth Tradition as the First.

Hardly any group of NA service members could be fairly judged by the behavior of selected individual members. Certainly if some of those members advocate "change" they will run up against the old addictive reaction to any change regardless of the nature of the change. NA is growing and it is certainly fair to say that members who have made great personal sacrifices and gone to uncommon lengths to inform themselves would be apt to see potential for growth along positive lines than less involved, less informed members. Sadly, those who see and recognize a problem and bring it to the attention of others somehow get identified with the problem instead of the solution. The same thing happens in families when a beloved member dies. The bearer of sad tidings is identified with the news they bring.

It takes a lot of love and prayer to serve NA and every growth period is followed by a reactionary period. This is the period in which the Fellowship considers and absorbs the changes. Reactionary periods are characterized by rumors, criticisms and gossip. These surface problems appear to dominate the scene. The truth, of course, is that the talk only causes the loyal, dedicated and involved Fellowship to go to greater lengths to clarify and understand the matters before them through prayer and information gathered from enough sources to satisfy themselves that they act on principles and not personality.

We have a lot to be grateful for and,

God willing, it will soon be time to go to work again. Addicts who might be seeking recovery die daily. At least complainers within the Fellowship aren't dying and theirs' is a greater hope than ever before that a lasting and representative testament to our gratitude to our Fellowship for all it has given us will be available to those now dying.

--Anonymous

THE POWER ALTERNATIVE

In this insane and complicated world I am offered an alternative. I have been through an entire life of hell and self-inducted misery. Every corner I turned, every path I took, every decision, lead me to a dark emptiness. Void seemed to fill me. I know that I have seen this in myself and in other people. Each breath was made more and more difficult to take by agonizing pain. There seemed to be no relief. Through the course of surrender, I do have a choice. My alternative is ultimately with a power much and far greater than myself.

My way was not working. Who makes me angry? What makes me bitter, resentful, jealous, pitiful and weak? I make myself that way. Certainly, I have made some (though very few) decisions in my life that were right and these, usually only coincidence. Through the Power Alternative, nothing is coincidental. Everything happens with reason and precision. The schematics of my life were laid out long before my conception. There is no control in my hands when the Power is in charge. There is no failure, only what is to be. When I decided that my

Power was in control I did not have to worry about the outcome of any situation. It is already taken care of. My power is loving, giving, strong and understanding in all circumstances. There is nothing that will turn out negatively.

You may laugh at the phrase "Que, sera, sera, but through faith in a Higher Power, one who is greater than me, what will be - will be. In the early phases of turning my life over to the will and care of God I seemed to only give him the little things and I still try to keep a lot of the most significant ones to myself. I must trust God. He cannot be tested. There is something of a Doubting Thomas in me as probably is in everyone. Hesitation and doubt must be replaced with the true positive action of giving it all up to God. Faith grows little by little, but it does grow. With each designation to my HP I find that it is a little easier to get go and grow.

This step is probably the most difficult, yet it is the most important, this letting go and letting God. I am so accustomed to the unmanagability of my life that I find myself afraid to give up the inadequate coping mechanisms in myself. I have had these inadequacies for so long, I am more comfortable with the pain, or let's just say used to the pain. All that I had in the past was a facade of power and in turning myself over I find that unmanagability to be impractical and impossible. When I grasp the Power Alternative everything is possible. With God as my power there is no problem, no worry, and absolutely no empty lone-

liness. I am taken care of!!!

--Cheryl S.
Atlanta, GA



"YOU ARE LOVED"

I thrived on that message for a long time. "God loves me? Far out! You too? Fantastic!" I needed that more than I wanted it. My needs have been fulfilled today. I am alive and free through my faith (dependence) upon God. God cares for me and loves me.

As a matter of fact, God loves me more than I love myself. He takes better care of me than I can. He kept me alive when death was my only answer. He knew there was another answer, I didn't. He can pick me up no matter how low I go. He carried a message to me when I was so far from reality that, well, I can't describe how far. He caught me when I went "over the edge."

God loves me and you. If you don't believe that, check to see if you are alive. I am my own proof, but I don't really need proof. Faith and love have to be unconditional, as is God's love for me and you. But, that's a whole 'nother story.

Grow with the Flow of God's Love.

--Scooby
Memphis, TN

FOLLOWING THE INSTRUCTIONS

The NA approved literature provides the suggested instructions for gaining freedom from the old ways. My way the

way-off self-will got me here. Self will can not work the Steps. It really pays to read the instructions out of literature approved as a way of recovery.

When worked, taken and lived the way they are written, the Steps give us freedom. If we take them as we interpret them, we leave the disease, which is so cunning, baffling and overpowering, loopholes that it can creep through and kill us.

Remember we are willing or we die. We may not desire to work the Steps according to any specific literature. We may want to complicate it with our self-will. No one has ever been too dumb to follow the NA instructions (Steps), but there have been many who were too "gifted" to take the Steps as they are written. Any fool can work this program following the Steps, doing it by the book and by the guidance of conscience. God works the Steps; we are not capable of it. It is simple, but too hard to do without God's help. When all else fails--follow the directions!

--Anonymous

* * * * *

DON'T WORRY ABOUT FAILURE, WORRY ABOUT THE CHANCES YOU MISS WHEN YOU DON'T EVEN TRY!!!



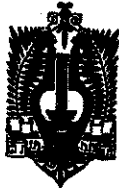
* * * * *

"It is not life that kills -- rather reaction to it."

* * * * *

RECOVERY IS A ROAD

It's a hard road to recovery
with many paths that
can lead us astray.
There are many hills and turns,
obstacles which block our
way and try not to let us pass.
But recovery is a beautiful
road and we are honored
to take it.



--Tony
Marietta, GA

SURRENDER

The God of my understanding has granted a great gift to me in the course of my recovery. Before coming to NA and in the early days of my recovery, I had a great need to understand things. This need has been in part removed.

Today I believe that there is a price, too great to pay in many cases, on my personal understanding. For me, understanding things puts me in control of them to some extent. Such understanding can be a comfort but I think of the many times since coming to the Program of Narcotics Anonymous when I had no understanding at all and things went very well. It now seems that some things are given me to understand in order that I may act in accord with God's Will for me. Many other things I leave to the wisdom of my creator. Understanding more than enough to do my part seems to rob me of what most people call "luck."

Surrender, in terms of recovery, restores to me the good fortune I

need in my life to offset my addictive tendency to screw things up. Also it brings a peace. Having experienced God's Will in my life and seen it in the lives of other recovering addicts like myself, surrender is more like a sure thing than something reserved "for emergency use only."

--Anonymous

HIDING FROM THE SUNSHINE

I never meant to be this way.
It was an accumulation of a lot of days
of sitting in barrooms from dusk to dawn
wanting most of all to be alone,
play the juke box and hear my songs
and think about the hugs I didn't
get today.
My body aches but not from pain
but because yesterday and today were
both the same.
As I wander along the city streets
hoping there is someone that I might
meet
who is kind enough to accept my defeat
and share a little time and joy
for a lonely country boy
and give me a hug or two.
I drink and use and don't know why.
I want to stop--God knows how I try.
Then I look into the smog-filled sky
and smell the putrid air
that stinks up everything I wear.
At last the sun is going down.
Now for that air-conditioned sound.
All the fellows will be around.
The clink of glasses and friendly fights
will be music to my ears tonight.
There's hardly any women around.
It's a man's hangout I have found.
I like the peace. I know all the crew.
I wonder if they miss a little
hugging, too.

Then one day I found a loving God
that wants me around.
I turned my life over to Him with-
out a sound.
Peace and contentment can be found
and hugs and "I love yous" abound.
God I love you and maybe some day
we can to some hugging too.



--Lonnie H.
Atlanta, GA

ENTHUSIASM THROUGH ACTION

This is a program of action. I have studied the literature and that has been fine. It has been when I have gotten into actively carrying the message or doing the Steps that something has happend.

Action for me involves getting out and living, working, doing studies and basically doing what is here and now for me to do. Action can be getting up and going over to a newcomer to welcome them, trying to make it my business to welcome every newcomer at a meeting.

When I sit around talking about something I get bored sooner or later. When I finally get into action on a project, even if it is doing the wash or cleaning up around the house, I begin to feel enthusiastic after a while. The benefits come to me and I get addicted to the action of going to a meeting and working the Steps. Thus, I have some constant stability in my life even during times when changes are coming rapidly.

If I am bored or depressed that is a good indication that I am not

turning my life over. Also, when I am frustrated, hurt or disappointed I can tell my life is being run by me. The action of writing where I am at on a piece of paper, then sharing it helps the bad attitude to pass.

Character defects become character builders when I work the program. Most of the action is the following through with the things that we talk about during meetings. So, when I get into action--action with the suggested program of recovery--it works!

--Anonymous

HOW I MAKE ME FEEL

When others cross me,
it's so hard to see
That my faults are bothering me.

If you make me glad,
mad,
upset, or sad,
I need to know
that I made it so.

Those feelings of mine
I truly possess.
What you make me feel
is my choice, no less.

- Lee Jones
Selma

* * * * *

"THINGS ARE MORE LIKE THEY ARE NOW
THAN THEY HAVE EVER BEEN BEFORE."

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For information on how you or your NA Group can help carry the
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THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF N.A.

We keep what we have only with vigilance and just as freedom for the individual comes from the Twelve Steps so freedom for the groups springs from our traditions.

As long as the ties that bind us together are stronger than those that would tear us apart, all will be well.

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 out 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 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.