



No. 2 April/May 1996

UNDIMINISHED GOODNESS

I have discovered in myself a need to do good, helpful, selfless things for people. The program of Narcotics Anonymous allows me to do such things privately and in sufficient quantity to help me offset the poor opinion of myself. This opinion is so much at the core of my disease. Doing these things seems to alleviate my need to goof up things. My clean time teaches me that my self destructiveness can be wildly disproportionate to whatever it is that bothers me. I do not believe that the twelve step recovery processes are a mental strategy for success. There is no promise that the twelve steps insure happiness and a new life for anyone who seeks it. The only promise is freedom from active addiction. The disease is very real and the ways my disease works, even in recovery, astonishes me. Every day clean seems to me a dazzling miracle of kindness and benevolence of a gracious and loving creator. God is no longer up there. God now understands that I somehow got off to - or wound up on - the wrong foot in life. What I need is what I get.

I came across a law of economics the other day in a funny little book. It says the first law of economics is that we get what we want. The second is that we cannot mess this up. The third is that we get as much as we need as often and in the degree that we can stand it. It will be funny if these laws turn out to be true on some level in my life? If my life is a dream, let it be a day dream, full of sunshine and light. I cannot say I do not have a taste for the nightmares, or that they do not engage and amuse me. It is just that they distract me and make me forget my divine origins. My entire life is an opportunity to coexist with the supreme loving creator on a daily basis. The N.A. program of recovery has gently guided me into this view through working the steps.

I went to an N.A. twelve step retreat this weekend. One of the guys was sitting by the pool watching his kids play in the water. In a horrible moment he realized his little girl was on the bottom, moving her arms and did not know that the surface was only a leg kick away. We were all three years old once. He leapt to the rescue and pulled her out before any real damage was done. Perhaps she would have put it together that she was in the dreaded "deep end" and saved herself. Because her arms were moving slower, it is more likely she would have sucked in a deadly lung full of aitch two oh and be no more a walker in life on this planet. We all come that close every day. We all need a caring watcher who understands. The fact of our addiction is having certain areas of life that we have not been in before clean. In these areas we often feel very much over our heads. The point maybe is to recognize that we really are over our heads and while parts of recovery may be in truth very simple, they may be completely out of our reach due to inexperience or a lack of personal affirmation. I have the feeling that my friend had the wonderful chance to save his child's life. He enjoyed the nonchalance that allows little children to resume their play and learning in the waters of life within moments. He shared how he overcame his initial tendency to grab her and shake her. He shared how he wanted to tell her awful things to make her be afraid and to avoid the deep end. Perhaps someone had grabbed him when he was small. Anyway, this time he didn't have to act on the impulse and his sharing increased our joy.

I stood on a street today and enjoyed one of those little meetings with a man who grew up where I now live and we shared about everything. He was telling me how he was having trouble finding a home group in a new part of Pittsburgh where we live. After I gave him the "start a new meeting" response, he said no, the trouble was he was having a ball and couldn't yet choose among all the wonderful meetings and people he was experiencing and meeting in recovery. We both grinned over the way Pittsburghers seem to imagine you know the streets of their hometown like they do. Anyway, we got into that and how much the program has continued to grow and prosper. I attended MARLCNA in Harrisburg a few weeks back and spent almost the whole time in a room full of addicts who were from another state and were active on the internet.

As far as I can see, members who want to can get hooked up on their personal computer and go places on the net where they can ask questions and get answers continuously that here to fore were the sole province of elected trusted servants in service at the world level going to their first World Service Conference. This dazzling information explosion may be the long sought way that God is going to give each member a fifty-two card deck in dealing with their needs as concerned members.

I talked to my friend, who had attended MARLCNA a few years back and told him that it looked to me like world service had cut the cord and was floating off in a self congratulating assembly of people rising in a hot air balloon with no notion that the planet passing by under them was where it was really happening and that no matter how far you can see up in the sky you really must come down sometimes to do any good in the world. He laughed and we both enjoyed one of those peaceful moments when we can see clearly and quietly exactly how wonderfully God is working this particular miracle. I have been in world service during a blessed time when we



were really granted the ability to work among and be a part of literal miracles of recovery. These generations of God's Will dot our N.A. landscape with moments of addict selflessness, love, and a miraculous devotion to the good of all with the attentive support of the entire awakened Fellowship of N.A. God, it is so terrific that the love is still going on today!

It is important that we always stand at a place that can be an ending or a beginning. That is the glory of the spiritual life, that we can consciously bring our minds to the point of realization that we each co-create the beautiful life with our choices, our phone calls, our admission of powerlessness: these chain react

with other clean addicts to produce our recovering landscape: a land where dreams come true, little kids enjoy the devoted love of clean, trying parents who are brave and truthful enough to admit it when they screw up without the sickening need to cover it up. God, it was really hard for me to put it together as a little kid. It happened more than once that an adult had blown it right in front of me yet would beat the hell out of me for even suggesting that were the case. Talk about confused! It is so wonderful to be clean and to feel that there is nothing God can't handle in my life now or to come. So, thank you God for your help. It makes all the difference in the world.

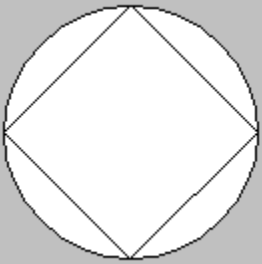
New Attitudes...

We shall attempt to print all articles promoting a change in our intolerance and indifference towards spiritual principles. We seek any and all ideas for this publication to become a venue for change. All materials shall be printed in a spirit of anonymity.

We encourage the use of humor and lampoon to stimulate thought and levity. Our hope is to find ways to transgress the perceived separation that exists amongst members of our society.

Internet Recovery?

Inter-outer-under-get the net. Been "on line" for only a month and a half. Boy what fun this has been. Personal attacks, wonderful new friends, infringement claims for our literature, hard working members, flaming flamers, profanity, full names and addresses posted, lurkers, recovery and feelings. What an interesting place.



For some a trap and a new obsession as I experienced the first few weeks. As in all forms of recovery it can become anything we make it. It has already become a place of possibilities yet unthought of. What to do with a tool so powerful and with availability growing every day? It appears that for many, things are a changing already with this new tool.

On-line chats and forums for all. The basic problems within our fellowship, show up there too. One service is NA-ADMIN. A forum for service related discussion. It has had a variety of topics and some very opinionated positioning. The non- face-to-face arena of cyberworld seems to be one that gives freedom to many addicts to be quite rude and vulgar to others with whom they have opposition. Poor behavior knows no limits and seems to have found a new home.

This new recovery ground has left anonymity in its dust. Without considerable effort, remaining nameless for those that might want to find out who you are is futile. So many posts contain full names and addresses that like it or not these people are becoming the publics image of NA, on line. It has the chance to be one of the best PI tools we have ever thought of using. But for many it has become the way to not go to meetings in their local fellowship. I have linked and sent materials to addicts at all point of the compass and this for me is very exciting to see happening. Members claiming to having years of time, post things that ought not be said in private, much less in public. Where does it go from here?

I've been thinking that it can go most anywhere those involved wish to see it go. My thoughts are for a spot were we will have NA archives available to all. It can be a place were service materials and updates are available almost instantly. HOME PAGES for all service committees with the resources available but to a few are available to all. A place to begin new writings by simply supplying a spot to drop things off. The ideas go on and on....

Cyber-recovery? Why not? Why? Who knows. But it certainly will be a resource for us all, in times to come. Seems to be about availability and instant contact. Speeder recovery... what a concept. Come on in the waters fine.. surfs up dude.

SELFLESS SERVICE

Service in N.A. has been one learning experience after another for me. From my very first service commitment and continuing on today, I'm learning more about myself, things I do well & things I've had to accept about that I'm not real good at. I'm still working at it. Through service commitments with others a loving God has revealed things to me that I need to accept about others.

Throughout our literature the word "we" is used instead of "I". Understanding that it is through a group conscience that God expresses Himself and not just my own opinion, has helped me in my affairs with others. Being as arrogant, egotistical, self-centered & judgmental as I am, it is difficult to be open-minded to a group conscience because I feel that I know all the right answers.

Realizing that the traditions were formulated to protect us from ourselves I continue to ask questions about how to apply them in my affairs with others.

Reading through the 9th tradition in the original Basic Text (before a lot of things were deleted) it talked about service boards or committees not having the right to rule, decide, dictate, or censor, but rather existing solely to serve the fellowship. In other words, finding out what the fellowship as a whole wants to do and then doing what was decided upon. Doing things in this manner protects us from uncontrolled selfwill by not

allowing the few to make the decisions for the many. This made a whole lot of sense to me, noting that some of my best thinking almost killed me. Thank God for a sponsor that I can discuss my decisions with before putting them into action.

N.A. service has truly been a blessing, in that it has allowed my thoughts of self to be switched to thoughts of others and how I can help. It has also taught me about anonymity "a state of bearing no name". In other words, doing something without anyone knowing and not expecting anything in return except the personal satisfaction of knowing I have helped both myself and others by doing the service.

Service was my proving ground for practicing principles that allow me to let someone else do and say what they want without feeling I need to prove them wrong. Acceptance allows me to disagree without becoming disagreeable. Patience & tolerance are valuable tools in most of these situations because people who act like I do tend to irritate me.

As an addict, I have difficulty being humble & selfless because I seem to be constantly looking for something or someone to fulfill my wants and desires, only to find that doing this never fills me up "one is too many and a thousand never enough". Service has allowed me to see that by focusing less on me and more on we I am given a precious gift. Freedom from the core of this disease-SELF-CENTEREDNESS.

from beetz's basement

Hi family, Well here is the 2nd issue, it's been fun so far. We would like to thank all those who sent articles, please send more J, and would like thank all those who subscribed and sent donations, we couldn't do it without you. For those getting this newsletter who have not yet subscribed, if you would like to keep getting this newsletter and would like to see it continue, please subscribe, we could use all the help we can get.

Now for the money stuff:

Total expenses for issues 1 & 2 - \$76.54

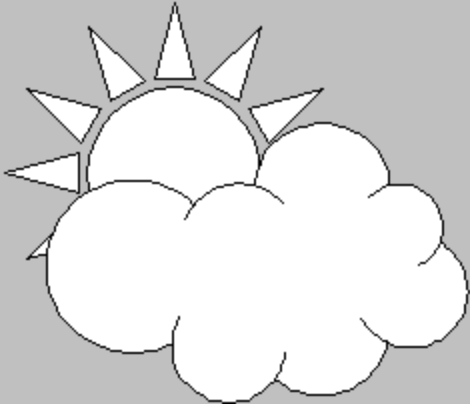
Total income (subs. & donations)- \$86.20

Balance as of 4/14/96 - \$ 9.66

Spiritual Encounter

Hey New Attitudes, ya that's what we need. Our old attitudes brought us here, but being here is not so bad. Learning ever learning we bring this vision to life. That last sentence is from our New book ,The NA Way of Life- Chapter One- Learning to Live. I just had a very spiritual encounter last weekend in Michigan at the Literature Conference. A few of us addicts got together and made history. We formed the N.A. Foundation to protect our new book from WSO censoring or editing it. This book was written by addicts and for addicts. Do you remember the Gray Book? When outside people get involved you end up with the 5th edition. No thank-you, I like the spiritual un-censored raw input of an addicts own experience. That's all we've got to give away anyway.

If you are one of those who feel that recovery is getting stale, ask yourself, "Am I still giving it away?" This was taken from the new book also and it reminds me of what I need to be doing in my own program. Since I'm computer "illiterate", what can I do? Well I could start with my home group and support someone who carries our message a long way, who has time right now and is making a big difference with his effort. I sat this weekend looking at another addict who really carries the message all over the world. He was playing a game of cards on his computer and I was just about to ask him how can he keep up with so much and go on physically and mentally and I realized that it probably helps keep him clean. So since I wanta stay clean I need to get off my A double S and do something, chair a meeting or 12, get on the phone, copy some good reading material and pass it around, call my sponsor, write on my 4th step. I can apply the principals in all areas of my life. I share openly at my home group because I believe they truly are my eyes and ears and I want to know what they see and hear, This is a we program and I need each and everyone of you to share with me your experience, strength, and hope. I



like new ideas to flow into my head. I met a so called famous addict this weekend with X amount of years clean. Guess what? He is just an addict like me trying to stay clean today with the help of N.A. We are all important, so go an extra mile, get involved, make a change, be a part of, feel the passion. I did and it feels great. Thanks for letting me share.

This Newsletter is being provided to any and all interested members of N.A. at COST please feel free to copy and give out as many of these as you like. We will be printing bi-monthly. Our cost is \$0.60 each so 1 yr, subscription would be \$3.60(.60x6) Please send articles and newsletter money to:

**New Attitudes
P O Box 447
Vestaburg MI 48891**

please make checks payable to New Attitudes/I Can't We Can

[e-mail: frbeetz@nethawk.com](mailto:frbeetz@nethawk.com)

P.S. We also deal in the barter system if you would like to send supplies instead of \$, we need stamps, paper (#20 8 1/2 x11 or 11x17), toner for Panasonic FP3001 copier, ink cartridges for Lexmark WinWriter 150C.

Opening the Door to God

When I first came to the doors of Narcotics Anonymous there was a poster of the steps and traditions on the wall of the meeting I went to. When I looked at them all I could see at the time was the word God. I thought that I was at some kind of religious cult. Then I saw the guys hugging the guys and the girls hugging the girls and thought I was at a gay religious cult. I almost bolted out of the doors, but I was on probation and had to get my paper signed. I had a lot of prejudices and blocks in my head. I couldn't even say the word God. The God I thought was of my understanding was something I didn't want, and hadn't worked for me.

I sat at this meeting, trying not to listen, with my closed mind, and I heard a message that I had never heard before, I had felt so much alone when I came in, and I hurt so much inside, but after I heard this message, I've never felt alone again.

Someone at this meeting suggested that I pray to "whatever was out there, whatever was keeping them clean". After this meeting, I went to my room and I did what was suggested to me. I got on one knee, looked over my shoulder to see if there was anyone who could see me, then got on both knees and said "God, whatever you are, whoever you are, please help me cause I can't live this way anymore." You know what happened? Instantly I felt a wave of relief, I felt peace, I felt love, I felt the weight of 20 years of using, the pain and anguish I had lived with so long, taken from me. I felt something telling me that it would be alright and that I was loved. I felt hope, for the first time I could remember. I was on a "pink cloud", and I loved it!!! The whole point of recovery to me today is to try to do the things that help me to reach and maintain this feeling. It's the best high I ever had.

I don't understand God, but when I consider that MY will and MY life, is to get high and die high, I makes it real easy to turn that will and live over to something that even though I don't understand it, I do understand that God loves me and cares for me.

I am grateful that the 3rd and the 11th step refers to "God as we understood him", past tense, I don't understand God, but in hindsight, after things happen, then I can see what God's lesson for me was. All I have to do is have faith that God will take care of me better than I could ever take care of me.

I try to work the steps as best I can, I stumble sometimes, I make more mistakes than I'd like to, but when I'm ready to stop doing things my way, God always is there to make things right, to hold me, to guide me, to love me.

Thank God I stayed at that first meeting, thank God I am alive today, thank God that I am a good husband and a good father and a good son today. Thank God that I am clean.

STEP ONE

"WE ADMITTED WE WERE POWERLESS OVER OUR ADDICTION; THAT OUR LIVES HAD BECOME UNMANAGEABLE."

This step means exactly what it says. It is simple in form and its meaning not nearly as ambiguous as many would have us believe. The total achievement of overcoming our disease in practice is most difficult and elusive, but ADMITTING powerlessness over the

disease and the recognition of the devastation caused by it is a simple, humbling disclosure.

The difficulty in admitting powerlessness over any situation or life circumstance is a burning desire on the part of ego (or lower self) to be in control. Our addiction has us almost unconsciously ruled by a mind-set of extreme separateness and attack, a condition of mental isolation in which we look upon the world through condemning eyes, paranoia, judgement, and anger. This condition throws us into a state of war with the world and at war with ourselves. It cripples spiritual growth with guilt and fear of the world around us. I want to be the one responsible for change and my ego masks the "I" by allowing me to give the credit to God after I've made all the decisions.

Yes, I am powerless over my addiction; my life is unmanageable. I cannot make it alone. Left to my own devices, I will be trapped forever. Not by anything outside of myself, but by the encircling wall of my own false beliefs. I live in the lies and fantasies that tell me things are not really as they are. The Truth is, things are NOT as I see them, nor as I fantasize them.

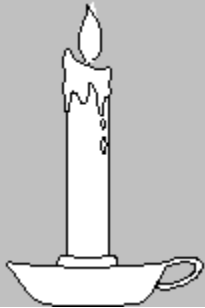
We have two choices: To move towards ultimate Truth and recovery; or pursue the insanity of our disease and be forced to continue the cycle. My every thought and action will be based on FAITH, TRUST, LOVE, and FORGIVENESS. Should I falter or slip along the way, I mustn't give up my journey for I cannot. I can only postpone the outcome.

My disease and my ego are one in the same. The longer I stay clean, the clearer it becomes that we addicts are not as unique within the human race as we would like to believe. We simply pursue our self-destruction with more enthusiasm. The consequences of practicing our defects are more immediate and apparent for us than for "normal" people. It is this very curse however that blesses us, for it is the catalyst that drives us back to God when inertia and apathy would let us slip away into self-centered complacency. We are on a journey without distance to a goal that has never changed. That goal is to be at one with God. The method is the steps of Narcotics Anonymous. The vehicle to carry us will be love and forgiveness for ourselves and all others.

HOW ANONYMITY IS THE SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION IN EACH TRADITION

1) "Our common welfare should come first, personal recovery depends on N.A. unity."

Anonymity is the critical ingredient in the first tradition, our personal recovery depends on it. It depends on unity, and unity is corroded by the egocentricity that is inherent when



we are caught up in personality or individuality. Right from the very beginning the traditions point out to us the pre-eminent importance of anonymity. We are confronted immediately with the fact that we can not recover by ourselves, the individual addict can not find recovery in a vacuum, only in unity. Anonymity is our true nature, it is our name, we are Narcotics ANONYMOUS. Anonymity is clearly seen in this tradition. It is the force that drives away the egoself and fosters unity while nurturing our personal recovery.

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."

Here again it is really easy to see anonymity at the center of this tradition. No one of us carries any authority in N.A., even when we lead we are asked to do so in an attitude of humility and selfless service, not the usual one of fear based dictatorial control. God is the ultimate authority and in reality our only authority and he manifests himself through the spiritual principal of group conscience. When our egos interfere, as in the search for power or prestige, when any one addict disdains anonymity and attempts to gain control, govern, or manipulate other addicts, our unity automatically suffers. We join a home group and become part of, our personal opinions, experiences and input become part of a group conscience. Anonymity is the key here again with the emphasis always being placed on the conscience of the whole group, not on the opinion or power of will of any one individual member. It is here in this joint spiritual action as we surrender our egos to the group that God shows himself. And where there is God the disease is automatically arrested and recovery is then possible.

3) "The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using"

Here again anonymity rules as the lowest common denominator, no emphasis is placed on individuality. It doesn't matter who we may think we are (our image) or what or how much we used. Our individual characteristics or how much or little money we have are not important or necessary for membership, just that good old desire is all any one of us needs. We are brought together again in anonymity, grouping instead of separating, blending in instead of standing out, because we all have the same desire to stop using. We put aside our individual agendas in order to join others in a new life of service and anonymity. We must recover together and equality (anonymity) is the key.

4) "Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or N.A. as a whole"

Here we have anonymity expressing itself from the point of view of the whole group as a unit. Autonomy is critically necessary for each group to be able to function at it's natural best and to have available that maximum flexibility for change while it carries out its primary purpose, it must have that freedom. But, as important as that freedom is, it must stop at the door of other groups. Even the home group is subjected to NA as a whole, to

the spirit of NA, to the principle of recovery. It is group Anonymity that makes our autonomy possible!

5) "Each group has but one primary purpose, to carry the message to the addict who still suffers"

In order for each group to fulfill its purpose, carry the message of recovery, it must of course do that through the actions, desire, and example of its individual members, here again the egoself of the individual addict must subjugate itself to the greater purpose of the group. We can't keep what we have unless we give it away. All that is not given is lost. We must become channels for God's Love, that is how we recover through God's Grace. The emphasis is again placed on Anonymity, away from the importance of the self and towards the importance of the group. The needs of the many outweigh the need of the one.

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."

Having been reminded of the nature of our primary purpose in the previous tradition here we are now warned of the possible diversion from that purpose if instead of remaining totally focused in our anonymity we were to dilute the power, purity, and energy of our message by endorsing or affiliating with other fellowships, clubhouses, treatment centers, etc. Vigilance is critical and made easier the more we adhere to the principle of anonymity. Maintaining our singleness of purpose without wasting any energy by straying onto the soft shoulders of outside enterprises of related facilities we insure the directness and success of our purpose. Individually we are more vulnerable to the allure of money, property, and prestige, but in anonymity, as a member of a group, drawing from the whole we become powerful and focused.

7) "Every N.A. group ought to be fully self supporting declining outside contributions."

This tradition is our continuing reminder of the importance of remaining focused in order to successfully carry a powerfully pure message. The group must operate in total freedom, we can not afford to be influenced by any outside forces that would contaminate our message, but more importantly in the spirit of anonymity, no addict must be allowed to contribute more than their fair share. No addict must rise above the next addict in importance. We are all equal. We are all the same. We must all contribute equally to the well being and survival of the group and the message that the group carries. Anonymity is even more important in this tradition. It is very easy and almost automatic to place oldtimers on pedestals or to look down on newcomers as ignorant or having a lower level of recovery, but especially here we must never forget anonymity. We are all the same. The responsibility for the support of the group must fall equally on all of our shoulders. This applies to monetary as well as all other aspects.

8) *"Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional but our service centers may employ special workers."*

To further protect us from the danger of confusion and dilution we now begin to be advised of the separation that exists in N.A. and any service center that we (N.A.) may create. This is necessary so that if or when any professional help may be needed to help us carry the message it must be other than N.A. that gets involved. N.A. as such or N.A. as a whole consists solely of the recovery meetings. All else is not N.A. This is necessary so that our message is not tainted or diluted. Although some of us may be professionals in some other areas of our lives, when it comes to N.A. anonymity again takes precedence and we are all just another addict seeking recovery.

9) *"N.A. as such ought never be organized but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve."*

This is a further clarification of the same principle stated in the previous tradition. In any organization there must exist stratification and classification and this, of course, runs contrary to anonymity. Even those of us who are asked to lead, who have that capacity and possibility, we must do so only in the attitude of service and humility. We are always directly responsible to those we serve. Any time that we stray from this principal anonymity suffers greatly, the ties that bind us together begin to loosen and addicts start to fall by the wayside. This is why all of our organizational and professional efforts must be kept separate from our efforts to recover and carry the message, even the smallest underestimated influence could be fatal.

10) *"Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues hence the N.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy."*

Continuing to zero in on the importance of anonymity. Of course as humans (and addicts) we have an opinion on everything. We are just asked (warned is more like it) to keep them to ourselves while involved in a meeting or carrying the message in any way. The word never is used and never is a very final word. It means at no time. Opinions are nothing more than individual interpretations of a specific situation, they are based and rooted in ego and will sidetrack us every time. Anonymity on the other hand is based in egolessness and is never controversial.

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 film."*

Attraction rather than promotion. Promotion implies artificiality whereas we attract those to us who want what we have because our recovery speaks for itself. The spirituality of our daily lives is evident to those who are interested, it is real. It is not our great personalities that mesmerize the suffering addicts, it is the peace of God shining through our sincere eyes that hooks the ones that are ready. It is the good will that emanates from our meeting rooms because of the anonymity, because we try to place principles before personalities, because we accept and welcome and try to love one and all.

It is my observation that our Fellowship has been suffering from a needless conflict since the early nineteen eighties. A spirit of corporate competitiveness seems to have pervaded our Fellowship. Corporate buzzwords wind up in our recovery and service talk where we used to have terminology carefully worded to imbue our actions with spirit. We constantly reminded ourselves to set aside personal differences in favor of group purpose. We weren't forced to abandon our beliefs or ideas; it was just that the Fellowship seemed to recognize that we couldn't get anything done if we were "in it for ourselves." In the beginning, NA was in the groups and then there was a lot of activity in the formation of world services. This activity wasn't regarded as more important than what happens in groups, it was just a new arena of activity and addicts loved to get involved. In time, as world services began to pump out more paper, a perspective grew up that only those in the center of NA, i.e., world services, could really take into account the many factors that have to do with the problems facing the worldwide Fellowship. This perspective led to world services making moves to change the service structure from what is in the approved *Temporary Working Guide to our Service Structure* to something else. For years a series of WSC committees worked on the problem, promising each year to have the answer next year. This cost approximately \$50,000 per year. Items such as "What is Group Conscience?" dominated the work of the committees and version after version of our service structure were proposed. I don't recall there being any effort to merely locate the aspects of our current service structure and propose modest changes.... Well, come to think of it, there were structural changes proposed and voted on at the conference. What I mean is there were no reports as to the function/dysfunction of committees with recommendations for improvement, it was more of let's put a band-aid on the cut and work out a comprehensive plan.

Today, I don't see anything new like: 1) the Fellowship expressing an interest, 2) World Service advancing a simple, understandable plan, 3) a feeling of mutual affection, trust and respect dominating the tendency to disagree and form cliques. I bring this up because I sincerely believe these are among our options. It just has to do with our introduction, background and training as trusted servants which is an area that the Fellowship needs to consider and take seriously. Remember: it is hard because it is real but it is not that hard and we can find the solutions if we start looking and communicating now. This will have to be done member to member with the option to utilize the current structure wherever an opening can be made.

By opening, I mean we have entered a time where members no longer have the freedom to input ideas or ask questions on certain subjects. It might be fun to work up a list of topics and have different members contact world and chart the result. WE KNOW there are certain things you can't talk about or get direct, straight help with.

One of the great tragedies of our times is that the huge files of input from the eighties that is in the fireproof vault somewhere will at some point be regarded as obsolete and thrown out as trash without ever being made available to the Fellowship. The members who know these files are not allowed to access them and few even know of their existence. To

me, this is a breach of trust and is only the simple result of a closed system where only a few a privy to what is actually happening.

So, think and pray about it. It is up to you to react effectively by formulating proposals and putting them into the system. We hope this newsletter helps process or propose ideas that result in the increase of our common welfare. Still, nothing of importance will happen until you awaken and make your existence known. It is your right and duty to do so whether anyone has informed you lately or not. The only alternative is to let others do it for you and that results in a lot of mishaps.



GOOD MEMBERS AGAINST GOOD MEMBERS-AWAKEN NOW-

Divide and conquer is an old tactic. Misinformation, disinformation, and lack of information are terms that have entered the vocabularies of many addicts working in the service structure today. There is no doubt that controlling thoughts and basic information controls actions and makes for predictable behavior, it is actually part of our recovery process to use these basics constructively with the help of our Higher Power. We need the help of a God of our understanding even more in service to N.A.

Many members are unable to access their predecessors. Given the open nature of our Fellowship, you'd likely think that friendliness between past and present sub-committee chairs would at least occur. Under our present regime, our corporate fascination makes it important that successes during "our term" accrue to the credit of the chair, without the dilution of influence from past chairs. Isn't this a curious species of anonymity? Cut off from their predecessors, today's servants groan under the logically insulting weight of the "inventory". While purporting to be a thorough and proper job, the inventory was accomplished by a group of people who never worked together before under the company name that did the inventory, never did a similar survey or inventory or anything for another company but NA and for all I know dissolved itself once our inventory contract was fulfilled. Not a tried and true, ordinary company with a reputation to uphold for accuracy and truth: a company formed for the sole purpose of doing our inventory. Please tell me I'm wrong about this. It would be good news. And then the upshot of the inventory is that it has to be interpreted to be implemented so we have to have an resolution group to resolve the problems pointed out by the inventory. The Resolution Group, RG, proposed sweeping changes *IN PRINCIPLE* where the explanatory documents are not given out to the general Fellowship. One of the points that was telling about the inventory is that the average member of NA does not trust World Services anywhere near to the degree found among similar organizations. Even with the additional attention shown this year by our trusted servants, what good can it do. All that will help is for our members to form the habit of staying informed, asking clarifying questions, saying no to proposals they don't understand, and holding regular learning days so they will keep in touch with the questions that are hard to answer.

For me, the only thing the whole process will do is affirm our Traditions and our Ultimate need for one another. The Twelve Concepts take away many of our rights as members and create confusion. Those new to the service structure may not be capable of seeing the harm in a line like "group conscience is not a decision making process", but we have always polled group conscience to find our direction as servants. Even if it is wrong, the polls can be corrected if they are done openly with an informed Fellowship. Cutting members off from glaring facts like the wasted world service files is easy if no one objects, or even knows. Yet, the lines that divide us are not sharply drawn, it is just understood that some are "in" and some are "out."

Awaken Now!

THE SPIRITUAL VEIL

I have noticed in working among newcomers to our Program and from within my own experience that spiritual reality is veiled off from view to people who don't believe. There seems to be a veil over the spiritual. It covers up visions and realities until it is removed. I don't know anyway else to say this other than descriptive terms based on experience. The removal process is prayer. When I pray, I can see things that I know were there moments

before but so out of sight that I would have never seen them. I doubt that I could have seen them if someone else had pointed them out to me.

I am coming to believe that spirituality opens up a new world for those of us who can pray. It is available to us all, it just requires that we set aside our egos and take off our blinders. It is not like we can suddenly see everything that might work to our advantage. I can see others looking in the prayerful sense and I can see very well that others are in far greater need than I am. Often the insight helps me help others. Also, it is like things tend to line up in a pleasing manner or not. When not pleasing, it is like they are out of order somehow and sometimes only the smallest of changes can bring them back in line.

I am acknowledging this ability to see through my spiritual eyes because it is not the sort of thing that is talked about much yet where would I be without it. In my gratitude, I want to share the reality of the life of the spirit that has opened up for me through working the Steps and getting my ego out of my way so I can live in a greater world: the world of the spirit. More is involved than my eyes.

When I can see the world of the spirit, there is more information for me to make my life choices. I can hear what others are saying whether they are clear with God or not. The immense power of the Twelve Steps to make not only the dreams of a person come true but to make them into the kind of person who can live in those dreams. So often I feel that I lack for something and begin to feel badly then catch myself and realize that in some way I have been cut off from the God of my understanding and this has resulted in my feelings. All my real and most important needs are met by the spiritual life and that's the truth.

**NEW ATTITUDES
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