

**My Gratitude Speaks
When I Care
And When I Share
With Others
The N.A. Way.**

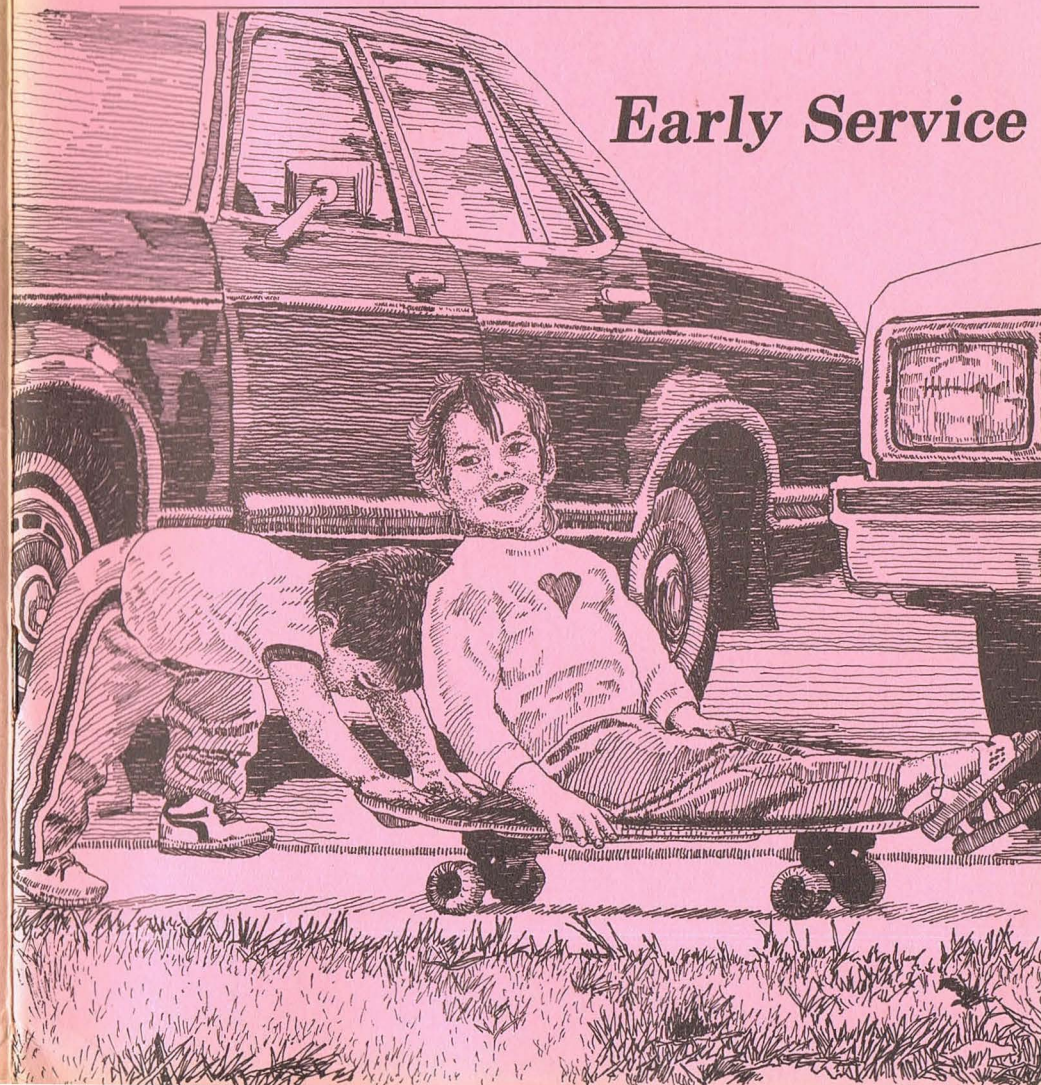
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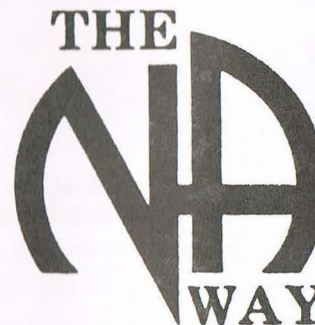
Early Service



THE TWELVE STEPS OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

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 these steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

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THE INTERNATIONAL
JOURNAL OF THE FELLOWSHIP
OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

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From the Editor



Last month we talked about the process involved in putting this magazine together, focusing mostly on our part. This month we'll focus on your part. You may wish to know what we are looking for in articles, and what publication standards we follow.

Personal recovery experience makes up the bulk of the *N.A. Way*, and we do not expect that to ever change. In this category we are looking for your thoughts, feelings and experiences in trying to apply some aspect of the *N.A.* program. We are always looking for in-depth discussions about our principles or about any aspect of *N.A.*

These articles may be as small as you wish, or as long as four or five pages. Very small articles are now usually printed in the "From Our Readers" section. If an article is structured well so that it can carry a reader's attention for five pages, we'll print it. Four is usually more comfortable for our format. With illustration and call-outs, four pages amounts to about 1500 words.

We have no experience as yet to give you much direction regarding editorials. We expect that section to sometimes be "point/counterpoint," sometimes a single editorial and sometimes several responses to previous editorials. We have a few of all of the above moving through the editorial channels right now.

We are using the term "publication

standards" to mean such things as grammar and punctuation standards, which we can apply in the editing process, and also some things less tangible.

For example, when a writer refers to God, either by using that word or another, such as "Higher Power," there are a few considerations. Whether the writer capitalized or used lower case (Higher Power or higher power), we leave it as is. Be sure to consciously choose which way you would do it.

Also, we try to include a qualifier when referring to God, for example, "God as I understand Him," or "the God of my understanding," to avoid creating the sense that there is any single *N.A.* understanding of God.

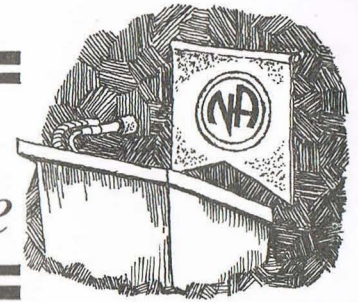
In a similar vein, we avoid a tone of dogmatism, or that sense that the writer is passing along the "ultimate answers." Instead we favor a tone which indicates that the writer is sharing personal experience.

Put simply, just put your best thought and feeling into a discussion of some aspect of recovery that is important to you. Do so with an open mind toward other people's perspectives, and it will make interesting and helpful reading for other *N.A.* members.

Maybe these comments will be helpful as you are working on that next *N.A. Way* article. We're watching our mailbox daily for it.

R.H., Editor

Experience, Strength & Hope



This section of the magazine is an international monthly Narcotics Anonymous meeting in print. All members of N.A. are invited to participate. Share your "experience, strength and hope" on any topic related to your recovery from addiction through the N.A. program. Please include a signed copyright release form (inside the back cover), and send it to:

**The N.A. Way; World Service Office, Inc.
P.O. Box 9999 Van Nuys, CA 91409**

What is Narcotics Anonymous?

N.A. is a worldwide Fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. We are recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other to stay clean. It doesn't matter which drugs you used, or what you have done in the past. We are concerned only with how we can help addicts recover.

It costs nothing to be a member of *N.A.*—there are no dues or fees. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using. Our program is a set of principles written so simply that we can follow them in our daily lives. The most important thing about them is that *they work*.

For more information about the *N.A.* groups nearest you, write us at the address above.

After I had been abstinent for three months, my fellow addicts began emphasizing the importance of getting involved in service work. They said this meant that I would need to attend a group business meeting, whatever that was.

I felt some fear of the unknown, not to mention fear of some of the methods that I had heard were used to "volunteer" a person for a trusted servant's position. They were at best questionable in my foggy mind.

Taking these and other procrastinatory reasons to heart, I attended my first business meeting three months later. I learned a lot, and also wanted to forget some things that happened. You see, up to that point in my recovery, love and caring were the only things this addict had cared to see or admit existed in the Fellowship.

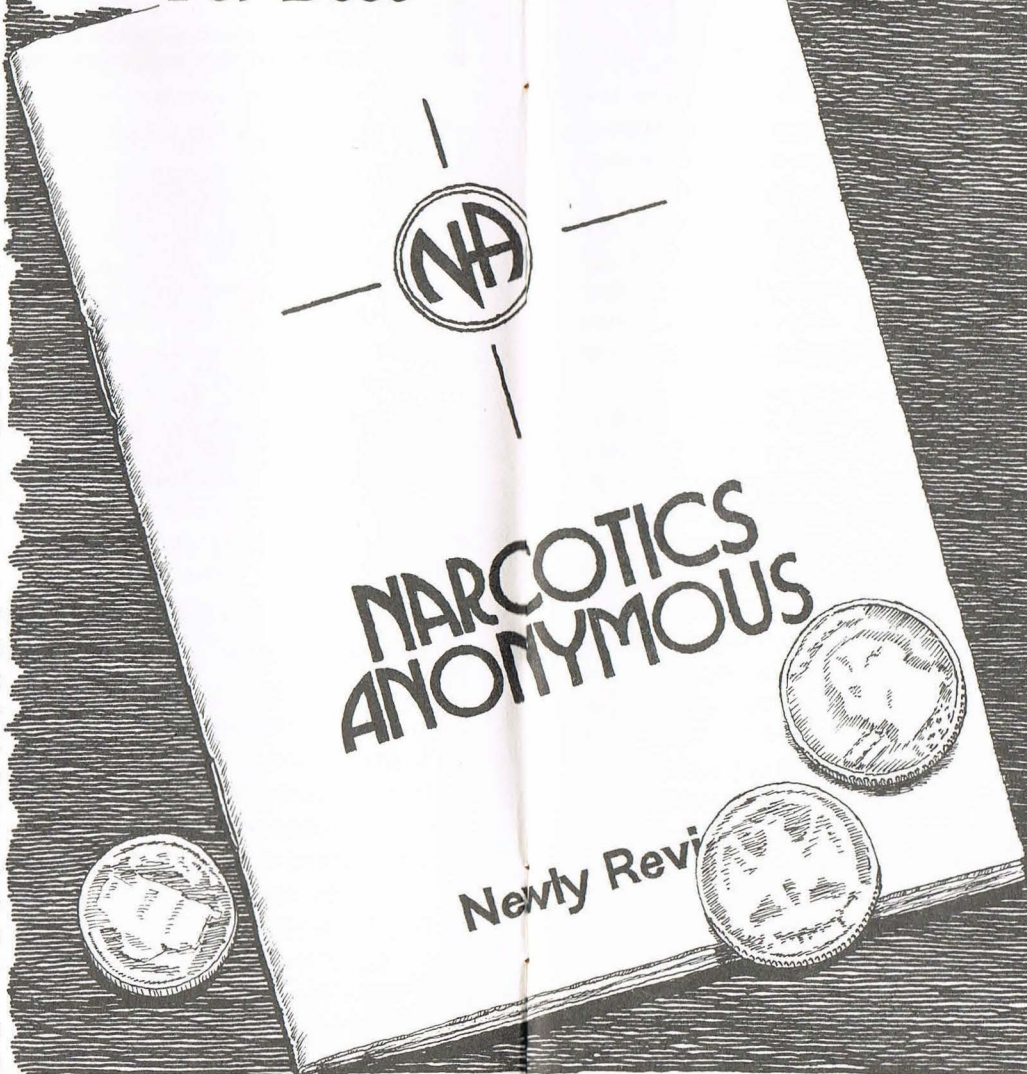
I remember sharing with my sponsor that I felt like part of my recovery was lost after attending that first business meeting. He shared that business meetings are necessary for N.A. to survive and grow, and that the way I felt was one of the reasons business meetings are held separately from recovery meetings.

I continued to attend those meetings at my sponsor's request. It was one of those things I did without question. Principles before personalities....

An ongoing concern at these meetings was our ability to find ways and means of providing literature to the newcomer. The group was growing at a fast pace, and growing pains were ever-present.

After attending about four monthly

Gaining Trust —55 Cents Per Dose



business meetings, someone nominated me to fill a recently vacated position. The nomination was seconded and voted on. The group had a new, unsure, but willing literature

chairman. Thank you Sponsor!

I began by working closely with our area literature chairman, who so conveniently lived five to ten minutes away from my residence.

The "we" of the program began to blossom within me much like nature in springtime. The help and guidance he shared was a real nice experience for this addict who had always refused help in the past.

"The group treasurer suggested that the money be held by me until the next business meeting."

It was the practice of the group to give away literature except for Basic Texts and Little White Booklets. They were sold at cost. One day, upon selling a Little White Booklet for \$.55, I asked the group treasurer what should be done with the monies collected from sales. She suggested that the money be held by me until the next business meeting. She also added, "It's okay, you are a trusted servant and we trust you with the money."

I suppose a pause would be in order to reflect upon my higher power's presence in this, for I believe in miracles—or the unexplainable coincidences we speak of in N.A.

The group treasurer and the area literature chairman just happened to be husband and wife. Therefore, accessibility to both was so comforting to me during that time.

Today, I don't recall who purchased the Little White Book, but thank you for spending \$.55 and helping this now trusting addict learn a very important lesson about trust. Equally important, thank you group treasurer for your inspiring and comforting words of wisdom and caring.

H.J., Georgia

Old Newcomer



I first attended meetings in a large city. At the time I began, there were probably fifty to one hundred persons in the program there.

I was told to "keep coming back," and I did. At first I would stay clean for a week or so, then use and come back and go out and use again. Finally, out of desperation, I decided to trust the people in the program. They told me I could stay clean one day at a time. I tried it. I found myself staying clean until after I did the dishes, or made the bed, until after I called someone or went to a meeting. By putting off using for small amounts of time, I finally got thirty days.

When I began to have some clean time I was told to "get involved." I started cleaning up after the meeting on Sunday night. I did this long after

I was advised to, even when I started chairing or doing other service work. It helped me a great deal, and I felt better about myself than I ever had before.

There were times during my early recovery when I was very ill. I was in and out of the hospital a lot and could not make many meetings. People who were in recovery were the only ones there for me. It meant a lot to me to have them, and I was in very good spirits during this time.

After I was recovered from my illness, I had only been back to meetings for a short while when I was injured in an auto accident. Once again, I was stopped from attending meetings.

This time when I came back I started feeling left out. Don't get me wrong, I had an attitude problem at this point, and I am sure a lot of it, if not all, was due to my paranoia.

However, the feeling was real at the time. I felt my meager contributions were not needed anymore. There were a lot more people in the program now. There were several people who volunteered for the things that I had been doing. I was still on the call list but there were now three or four pages of people on it, so calls for me were fewer.

Let me go back just a little. When I came to the program, my husband had already become a member. My ex-husband had my two little girls living with him, my parents were hurt and I had been unable to communicate with them. My present husband was either away from home, trying to reason with me, or physically stopping me from going outside the house. None of this worked, however,

until he said he was giving me a week to find another place to live. He stuck to it, and as the time drew nearer I decided I was hopeless.

*"I went to the first meeting
here two days ago
and was the only one there,
but that is better
than being home brooding."*

I had hurt the people I loved so much, they couldn't even be around me. In the process I wound up being alone and very sick.

I went to a meeting one night while my husband was gone, and this was the first time I had ever gone to a meeting for me because I am an addict. I had gone for all the wrong reasons, but now I went for me. I still didn't believe I could live with my husband but I felt better about me.

Now I have my children, my parents and my friends. I had lost all contact with my higher power, but N.A. helped me to get back in contact with him. I did continue to live with my husband. I loved him, but as an addict I was unable to show him that I did and do. Eventually we separated, and even though I felt I could not go on, I have.

I used him for an excuse not to go to meetings after my accident. I got to the point where I resented him for what he had. He had friends and went to meetings regularly during my confinement. I grew jealous of the same people I had once called my friends because they spent more time with him than I did. Eventually, he had his own life and I was left behind.

I found I couldn't support myself in the city because I was still unable to work.

I moved here and still couldn't make many meetings. There are no meetings in my area, and the closest one is still out of my reach most of the time. The people there know my situation and have even come down to get me. I have been to a few meetings by getting my father to take me, but I just can't get to enough this way.

The local mental health center talked to me about the need for meetings here. The area is surrounded by about five counties and N.A. is in only one of them. They have had a lot of calls about it and suggested I try to start one.

I contacted several people and was still kind of complacent about it until I realized I was becoming sicker by the day. Finally, I wanted more than anything to become involved again. I needed to get to more meetings, and I had the chance to start a meeting that would be closer and more available to me, and hopefully I would be able to reach someone who was still suffering. I quit trying to find excuses not to have a meeting here, and I started working on getting it going.

I went to the first meeting here two days ago and was the only one there, but that is better than being home brooding. I felt more connected to N.A. as a whole, and carried on my book study. Hopefully I learned something. All I know is that I came home very grateful for N.A.

I want to thank N.A. for being patient with me and helping me even when I was doing so little for myself.

J.D., Kentucky

So, you are a teenager looking for recovery—you're not alone. I got clean when I was seventeen, almost three years ago. It seems impossible, but believe me it's not. We can stay clean.

Young N.A.'s

You may face opposition; I did. It's not as bad as what I faced in active addiction. I am a female, and one setback was that early on some sick fellows tried to teach me all thirteen steps. I caught on and chalked it up to experience. I learned who the winners were.

Then there were the ladies. Our area didn't have many. The not-so-healthy ones treated me like I was a threat. No matter what I did, their attitude wouldn't change. Funny though—ironic—those same ladies usually didn't attend the women's group. I was lucky, my area did have a women's group. There I found ladies



who enjoyed each other. They became my best friends.

In the beginning I felt I had to prove I was an addict. Nonsense. I

"When others said, 'You were so fortunate to find the program so young because you didn't have to go through the hell I did,' I just wanted to puke."

was so sensitive. When others said, "You were so fortunate to find the program so young because you didn't have to go through the hell I did," I just wanted to puke. Like my pain wasn't real? I am an addict and my pain hurt just as bad.

Then I tried service work; what a trip. Everyone thought I was a joke. I guess they believed the younger one is, the more irresponsible. It was hard changing their minds, but I did. I had to work my rear end off to prove I knew what I was doing. It worked.

One day at ASC I confronted a man about a tradition violation. What? A youngster understanding traditions? That's right! Addicts began standing behind me, putting trust and faith in my recovery.

I think mostly so many N.A.'s see us come and go so often. They might be afraid we won't make it. Honestly, a lot of teenagers don't make it. It's not just young people, it's any new-comer. Don't worry, I wasn't a new-comer forever, and every year I'm a little older. If we're done using and want recover, "together we can."

What would the Fellowship do without us? We have an excess of

energy, big ideas, wild dreams, lives to live. Our spectrums are unlimited. One day we will be the oldtimers. Just imagine the Fellowship in the year 2059. Only we can see our Platinum Anniversary. (Remember, one day at a time.)

So don't worry if you feel like I once felt. It's normal. I just didn't allow my feelings to drive me out. I appreciate the hassles I once had. It gave me a reason to try harder. If it weren't for determination and those hard times I wouldn't have my husband, my career and hold an area chairman position.

I've made it so far!

M.K., New Mexico

ONE MEMBER'S SUGGESTIONS

Be yourself; be your best self. Dare to be different and to follow your own star, don't be afraid to be happy, enjoy what is beautiful.

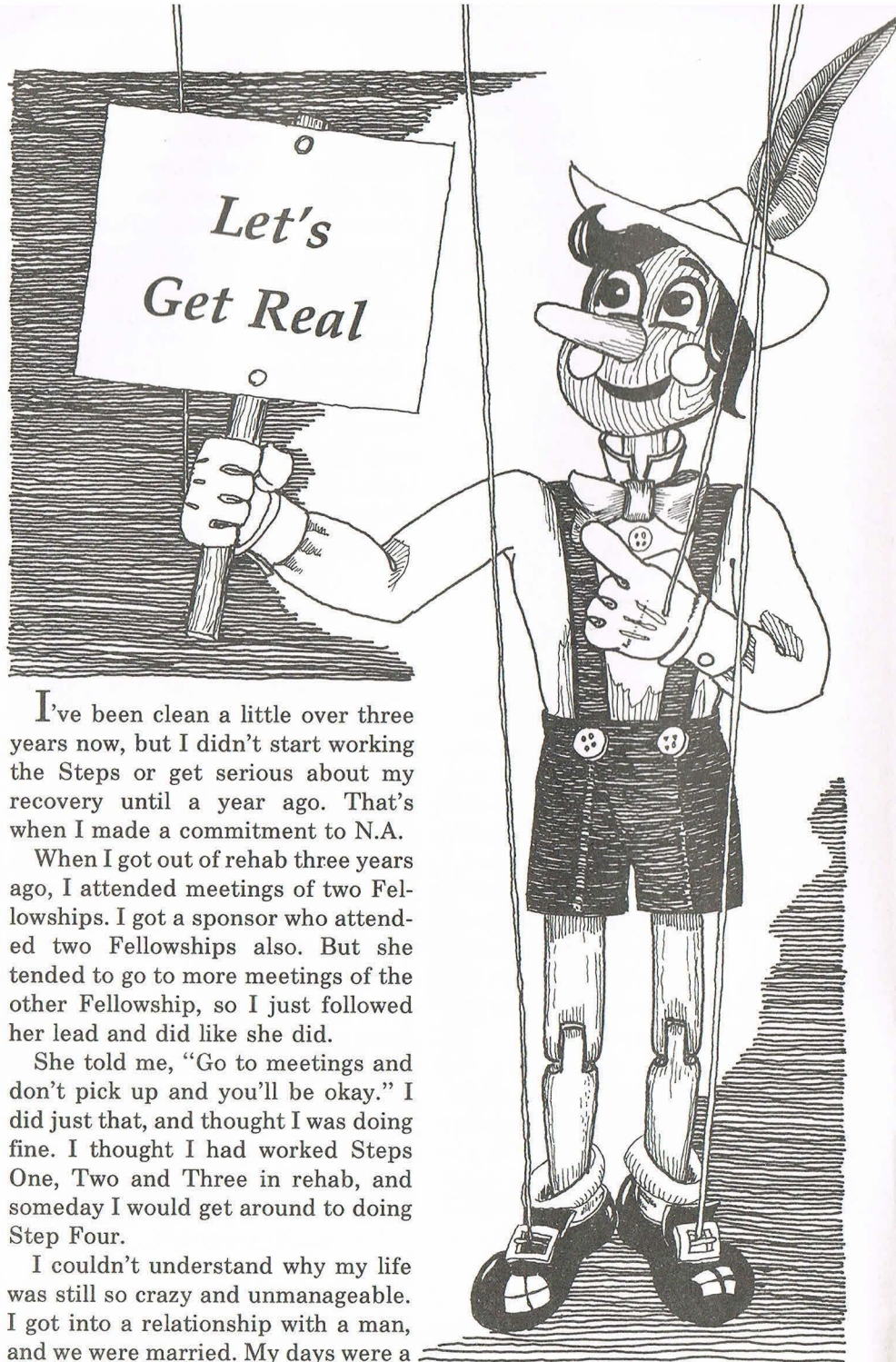
Believe that those you love, love you. Forget what you have done for your friends and remember what they have done for you. Disregard what the world owes you, and concentrate what you owe the world. When you are faced with a decision, make that decision as wisely as possible, then forget it.

The moment of absolute certainty never arrives. Above all, remember that God helps those who help themselves.

Act as if everything depended upon you and pray as if everything depend-ed on God.

Thanks for being there N.A. Way.

T.P., Ohio



I've been clean a little over three years now, but I didn't start working the Steps or get serious about my recovery until a year ago. That's when I made a commitment to N.A.

When I got out of rehab three years ago, I attended meetings of two Fellowships. I got a sponsor who attended two Fellowships also. But she tended to go to more meetings of the other Fellowship, so I just followed her lead and did like she did.

She told me, "Go to meetings and don't pick up and you'll be okay." I did just that, and thought I was doing fine. I thought I had worked Steps One, Two and Three in rehab, and someday I would get around to doing Step Four.

I couldn't understand why my life was still so crazy and unmanageable. I got into a relationship with a man, and we were married. My days were a

series of highs or terrible lows, with nothing in between. I thought of suicide a couple of times and attempted it once. I honestly didn't know what was wrong with me. I didn't realize until now how sick I was.

When I picked that sponsor, I knew nothing about working Steps. I picked her on the basis of her clean time. I figured that someone who had eight years clean must be doing something right. I'm sure she must have worked the Steps some time in her recovery, but she wasn't guiding me through them.

We did become the best of friends though; so much in fact that people used to mistake us for sisters. Today I realize that I don't have to be best friends with my sponsor. She doesn't have to be my marriage counselor, my shrink, my pastor, my mother or my sister. She has to guide me through the Steps, that's it.

When I finally hit bottom and attempted suicide, I felt so hopeless and lost. A few days after the attempt I went to one of my regular N.A. meetings. I know God led me there, because I hadn't planned on going; it just seemed like my car knew the way there and just took me.

I shared that night. I cried. I told everyone there I needed help. I asked them to please not let me isolate myself, because I knew I would just as soon as I left that meeting. See, I had no network of women to call, no friends to turn to. How could I? I used only my old sponsor for all my support, and when I felt she had let me down I had no one.

I was just so afraid that I'd attempt to hurt myself and maybe succeed. Using wasn't an option with me, but

death was. But deep in my heart I knew I really didn't want to die. I just wanted to quit hurting.

"She told me I should make a commitment to one Fellowship, that I would be cheating myself if I flitted from one to the other."

After the meeting a few people came up to me and asked me to go for coffee. I was deeply touched that people cared about a sick scumbag like me. That's what I thought of myself then.

God works in mysterious ways in my life. The woman I talked to that night, the woman that started to give me a little hope, was a woman I had previously snubbed because I was very envious of her. She knew it too. She knew I assassinated her character every chance I got, but she showed me caring and compassion because I was finally willing to ask for help. She was there all the time. She made herself available.

That woman agreed to be my sponsor. But she made it clear from the get-go that I'd have to do the work—she was going to help and guide me. She got her recovery in N.A. She had made a commitment to it. She told me I should do the same, make a commitment to one Fellowship or the other. She said I would be cheating myself if I flitted from one to the other.

Everything she told me that night made so much sense. I had the mistaken idea that I had to go to another Twelve Step Fellowship because I used alcohol. But addiction

encompasses all drugs, including alcohol. And then I learned that night that drugs weren't the heart of my problem, I was. What a revelation! And it was so true, because I was clean for those two years and my life was still such a mess.

She told me to make a commitment to as many meetings as I could comfortably attend each week, and to call another addict every day, preferably a female addict. Today I have made a commitment to N.A., and I have regular meetings that I attend each week unless something urgent happens that keeps me from them. I'm still not real good at calling an addict every day, but I'm aware of it.

Then it was STEPS, STEPS, STEPS! Thank God she's a step fanatic. I'm done with my Eighth Step now, and starting to pray for willingness to do the Ninth. They really have changed my life. They really work. I am a totally different person than I was one year ago.

I look at people today who were like me and I wonder how they can stand their lives. I don't mean that to be sarcastic, but they must feel terrible, because I did when I wasn't working the Steps.

Last summer I was talking to a guy who attends two Fellowships. I felt so good about the changes in my life through N.A. that I was sharing it with him. I talked about the commitment. He said he couldn't go to more than the one N.A. meeting a week that I saw him at because we were too "streety" for him, and all that talk about using made him just want to go out and try all those drugs he never did.

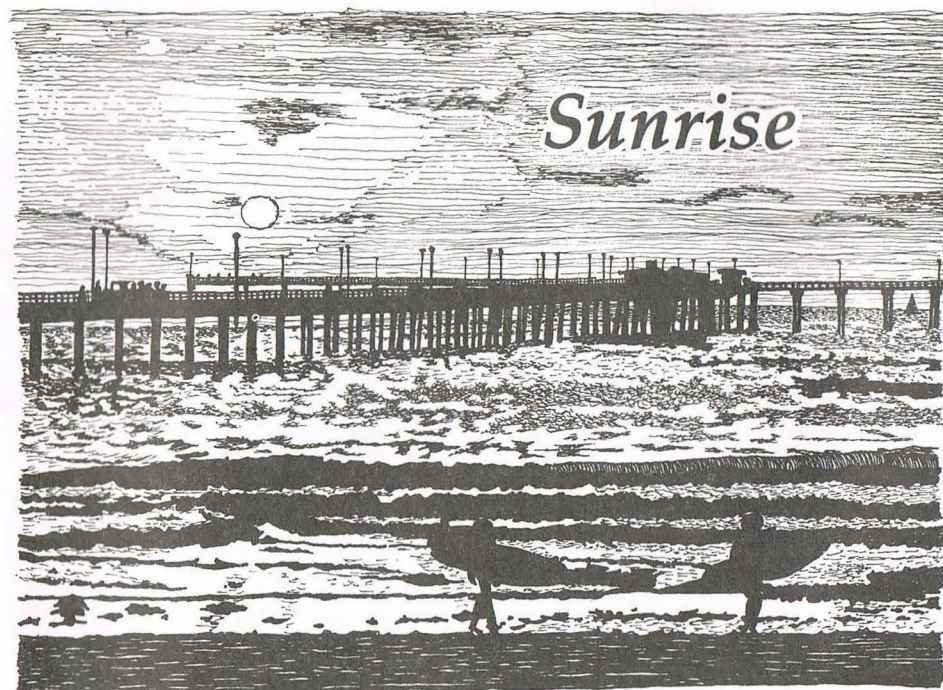
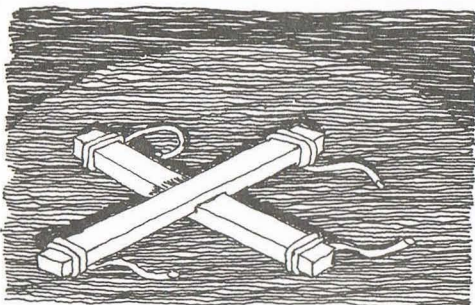
At the time I really didn't know what to say to him. I didn't, and still don't, have all the answers. But if someone were to say that to me today, I would say "LET'S GET REAL!" I would say, "when you go to the other Fellowship, does it make you want to go out and drink?" And, I'm not from the street, you're not from the street, there's a lot of us here in N.A. who are not from the street. If all of us so called middle-class, has-a-job, girl-next-door addicts quit going to meetings, they will become "streety."

If you leave N.A. when recovery sets in, those of us left don't have examples to follow. How are we all going to grow?

See, I can say that today because I understand, and I got that understanding from working the Steps of N.A., and listening to other addicts who work the Steps.

I "got real." I pray that that guy and other addicts who are riding the fence will get real, get honest with themselves. I'll be here for them when they do, just like others were here for me. No one could help me till I wanted to be helped. All the help anyone needs is here in the Fellowship and the Steps of N.A. "LET'S GET REAL!"

C.A.P., Pennsylvania



Sunrise

There it was, slowly peeping over the top of the ocean. Orange and beautiful, shining ever so brightly. What a sight. God is close; I know it, I can feel his presence in the air. It's as if he had reached down and put me in the most beautiful place in the world.

While I watch this beautiful sunrise, I wonder when, if ever, I have felt so good. A miracle has happened; I feel as beautiful as the sun rising up over the waves. I'm at peace with myself, caring about the things around me.

It is all a gift from staying clean in Narcotics Anonymous and turning it over to my higher power.

My obsessions are leaving me. Not only my obsession with drugs but with stealing, lying and food too. This is a freedom I surely have not known before.

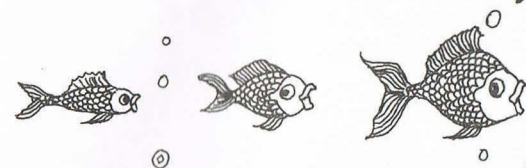
*"A miracle has happened;
I feel as beautiful as the
sun rising up over the
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caring about the things
around me."*

When I was using I never even had the time or the strength to get up and be at the beach at 6:00 a.m. to watch a sunrise. I would have needed a fix before I left, and one for when I got back, or I would have been sick.

What a hell I came from into this life of dreams and beauty. My dreams are coming true, slowly but surely, just as the sun is rising up over the ocean. Slowly, and oh, so beautiful.

Anonymous, Florida

So This Is the World Service Conference?

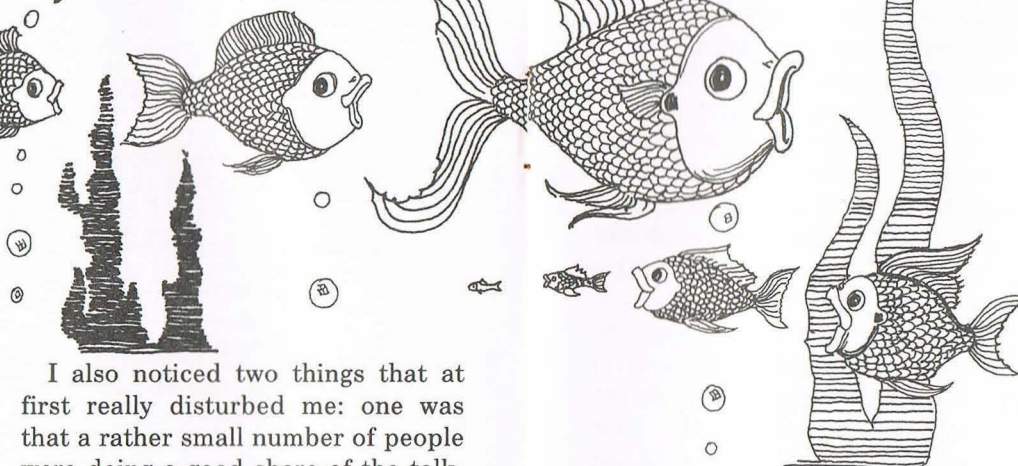


The '87 World Service Conference has just ended, and I have a million things (mostly positive) running through my head. I'm not sure how well I can say what I'm about to say, but my intention is simple: to let you know what it meant to my personal recovery to attend the WSC.

About six years ago someone at a meeting asked if I would be willing to be treasurer of that meeting, as the former treasurer had moved out of town. I was deeply moved that someone had enough faith in me to let me serve N.A. in this way. I gladly accepted the responsibility, and have continued to accept service positions wherever possible.

This commitment to service brought me to the WSC. I don't know that anyone could be prepared for the experience of being here for the first time. Just looking across the room at over a hundred representatives from the worldwide Fellowship of N.A. is overwhelming!

I had come here expecting to give sixty "yes's" or "no's" on the issues to be brought up. I quickly learned that the amendments, commit to committees, "lay on the tables," etc. were often necessary to accomplish what the Conference is designed to do: respond to the needs and wishes of the Fellowship.



I also noticed two things that at first really disturbed me: one was that a rather small number of people were doing a good share of the talking, and two, that there were a lot more people giving input and voting than just RSR's. There were lots of things being talked about that I was only vaguely familiar with, but the people who had been involved in world service seemed to have heard over and over for many years.

I really wanted to know what it was about, but it was embarrassing to say I didn't understand, or even that I disagreed with these people who had been here for so long. I felt insignificant, and that what I had to say was insignificant.

In my little region I had become "a big fish in a little pond" of sorts, and I really had to take a look at how I was doing in a much bigger pond. Isolation was tempting, but the desire to be of whatever service I could helped me to take risks. I started introducing myself and asking lots of what I thought were stupid questions. The love and

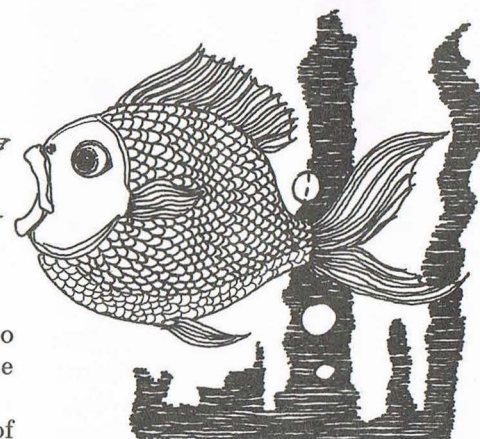
understanding I received made it so much easier to just get to know these beautiful people.

I realized what had made a lot of the Conference so disturbing: I hadn't really thought of many of the people in world services as fellow recovering addicts.

For some reason, the Trustees, WSC Committee Chairs and WSO staff really didn't become actual people until I allowed myself to talk, hug, and laugh with them. In doing this, I was able to learn that there were very few differences in the way we worked the Steps, and many similarities in the way we looked at service. I gained a greater understanding of being a trusted servant in one week than I had in the six years prior.

As I was able to put my insecurity aside, it was easier to ask about what I didn't know, share my views and voice my opinions. I was even able to

"I realized what had made a lot of the Conference so disturbing: I hadn't really thought of many of the people in world services as fellow recovering addicts."



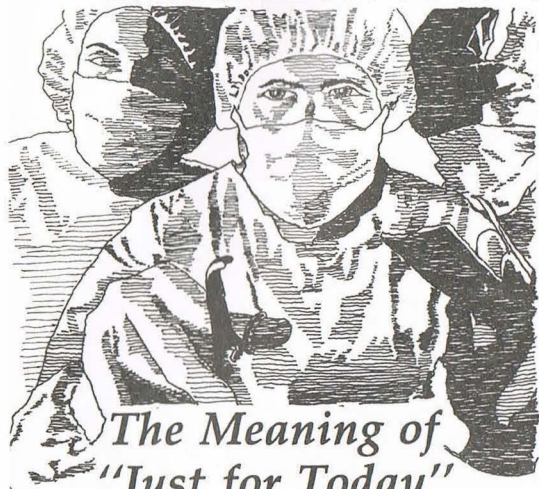
get up to the microphone without shaking too badly! When the day's business was finally done, I could see more clearly how all of these issues applied directly to my region as well as to my personal recovery.

My message to anyone who will be coming for the first time next year would be this: Take whatever time you can to read about what's going on in world services; take whatever opportunities come up to sit and talk with WSC committee members, Trustees, etc.; and take the time to work through the fear and apprehension that's bound to come up.

In my case, I feel as though my region has gained a better servant. I know more about what's going on, and my personal recovery has been greatly enriched.

Anonymous

Medication in Recovery



The Meaning of "Just for Today"

I would like to share my experience about a subject that gets little attention—using medication in recovery.

After being introduced to the Program of N.A. by a dear friend's father, I continued to stay in denial for three years. After finally reaching my bottom, I admitted I was an addict. I went to my first meeting, not only with lots of fears and anger, but also with hope. I continued to go to meetings, most times twice a day. I followed the suggestions I heard and got involved in service work.

At six months clean, our area sponsored an H&I campout. Several of us poured into my sponsor's car and went. We had a great time, with one exception—I wasn't feeling well. After the weekend, I decided to make an appointment for a check-up. I was frightened, because this was my first doctor visit since I'd been clean.

Well, the day arrived and I set off to his office. My fear was silly because all he did was a physical in-

cluding blood tests. I came home feeling relieved it was over.

Approximately four days after this doctor visit, I got a call from his office requesting I come back for more tests. I went. The doctor informed me that one of the tests would be extremely painful. I explained to him that I was a recovering addict and would prefer no pain medication. He agreed.

I got through the test with a considerable amount of discomfort, but I was on a "no medication" crusade, so I was proud of myself.

After the test results returned, my doctor called me in for a conference.

Diagnosis: Stomach cancer.

Prognosis: Terminal, nine months to one year to live.

I didn't throw my hands up and get high; all I could think about was, "Where is the N.A. meeting tonight?" I went to the meeting reluctant to talk. A very special person in the group held my hand while I told everyone what the deal was. I cried and told everyone I was frightened because of the medication.

They had written me a prescription for one of my drugs of choice. I got a lot of good feedback, but the one thing that stood out most of all was, "Just because we are addicts doesn't mean we are super-human—sometimes we have to use medication."

I went through numerous trips to the emergency room being given various drugs. I always went to a meeting as soon as possible. I had to sur-

render to the fact that I have two diseases, one of which requires medication.

Today I am still taking medication, though not on a regular basis. I am grateful to my Higher Power and the Fellowship of N.A. for so many things.

Although I have to take medication, I feel I am still clean. I am not abusing them. The bottom line is that I have to take them.

Thank you N.A. and God for allowing me to face the fact that sometimes we do have to use medication in recovery. I still have the cancer and they say I'm going to die, but . . . we'll see!

R.P., Georgia

N.A.: The Medicine for the Disease

Up until two years ago, I had completely accepted that I would always have to be taking some medication or another, because there was something wrong with me. I had feelings and emotions that I just couldn't live with and be happy. So as those overwhelming feelings surfaced, I took them where I knew they could be fixed—to the doctor.

He helped me feel happy when I was sad or depressed, mellow when I was anxious, energetic when I was tired, and clear-headed when I felt confused.

When my mind couldn't overcome the chemical imbalance in my brain, even with my doctor's prescriptions, I'd go to a psychiatrist and he'd prescribe just the right medication to treat my "deep-seated mental ill-

ness."

The illness changed a lot through the years, sometimes schizophrenia, sometimes manic depression, sometimes just plain old depressive or anxious disorder. But always it was treatable with a medication, and so it went for more than twenty years.

It never once entered my mind that I would ever be able to function normally without my medicine, or that this complete dependence was anything out of the ordinary.

As a matter of fact, the medicine did such a good job of altering my feelings that I soon found I could create real carefree highs and feelings of well-being by taking "a few extra," or mixing some of what was prescribed with what I could buy in a bar or on a street corner.

Of course through the years the symptoms got more and more severe, requiring more and more medication, and I was unaware of how desperately I was pursuing that warm feeling inside that indicated to me that I was okay. My lifestyle had become centered around feeling good, by any chemical means available.

Finally, the day came that no amount of medication, booze, or street drugs, or any combination of them, would work. All these stuffed feelings and emotions were coming out anyway, and I was in more pain than I could ever have imagined possible.

I again committed myself to a mental hospital for reevaluation and hopefully a new treatment. I told the doctor I couldn't live with the pain and insanity I was feeling, and we agreed that I could benefit from electric shock treatments. I was sched-

uled for my first one at seven a.m. on Friday morning.

Thursday the results of my blood and urine tests were complete, and they were automatically sent to the drug treatment center upstairs. As I was pacing the floor at bedtime that night, unable to sleep and looking forward to having whatever was wrong with me shocked out in a few hours, a lady from upstairs walked in and said simply, "Would you consider transferring upstairs? Our program helps a lot of people who have become addicted to drugs."

And that was the first miracle, the first awakening that my H.P. gave me. It all came together at that moment, and I knew that frying my brain the next morning wasn't the answer. Somehow my need for drugs was the problem.

I did transfer, and my second miracle happened that evening. Some teenagers pulled me into their N.A. meeting and I heard a message of hope. They said even I could know happiness and peace of mind, and all I had to do for today was not use. I was desperate to have even a fraction of what those people seemed to have, and I realized my way was never going to get it. So, humbly, I surrendered that part of me they called addiction, not knowing what to expect or do next. I became willing to try anything.

My life began to turn around that night two years ago. Very, very slowly, I'm learning to recognize my feelings and emotions and accept them as part of me. I'm learning to live with reality and to deal with the issues that at one time were so overwhelm-

ing that I was slowly killing myself rather than face them.

Today I am recovering from the disease of addiction. There is no medication in my medicine cabinet, nor in my body. The miracle of all miracles is I'm getting better! My H.P. and the N.A. Fellowship gently lead me through each day and are always there when I'm afraid. They're always supportive, caring about me and celebrating my joys, sharing my sorrows and teaching me, a day at a time, how to live a drug-free life.

I had never realized that as I was medicating the pain away, so was I erasing the good times, the joys of life. Today my H.P., through small miracles, is granting to me some of the joys I cheated myself out of.

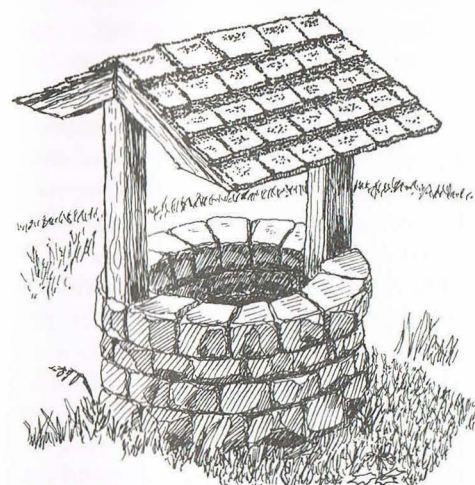
The joy I'm most grateful for concerns my daughter. Eighteen years ago, addiction had robbed me of the happiness and joy that I could have had when she was born. Last year at a mini-conference my daughter walked forward at the end of the clean time count down to receive her welcome tag and the Basic Text for the newcomer. God had seen fit to allow me to witness my daughter coming into the world after all those years, and today I am proudly watching her grow—clean, in the Fellowship of N.A.

I am so grateful for this and so many more miracles that have come to me. Most of all, I'm grateful for N.A., the all-encompassing miracle that makes all the others possible for me today. I pray that others might feel the joy and happiness that I have come to know through the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous.

S.M., Illinois

The Program Can Work Anywhere

I am currently incarcerated, so my story, or a piece of my story, can only reach other recovering addicts and those who still suffer via this journal.



I was born in a small town, somewhere between a normal childhood and the reality of not knowing any better. I was taken by that familiar struggle during early adolescence: the need to try, and the pride of the high.

One afternoon, in a state of oblivion, I stood committing a crime with a gun in my hand. Nineteen years of frustration and stupidity were released. I pled guilty and received twenty years. At the time of this writing I'm still in prison, and am over three years clean.

I would never have imagined that living life clean could be this wonderful. I wouldn't even trade my

recovery for freedom. Right now, my life is how I need it to be. It is certain that I will still have life's problems

"I pled guilty and received twenty years. At the time of this writing I'm still in prison, and am over three years clean."

confronting me each day, along with the problems of serving time.

I deal with problems the way the program tells me to. With the help of my Higher Power and the Fellowship, I overcome and carry on. The program works no matter where you may be, no matter what type of life you may live. Though I sometimes wish I didn't know now what I didn't know then, the program has taught me growth in every step. I'm still human, with all my faculties intact.

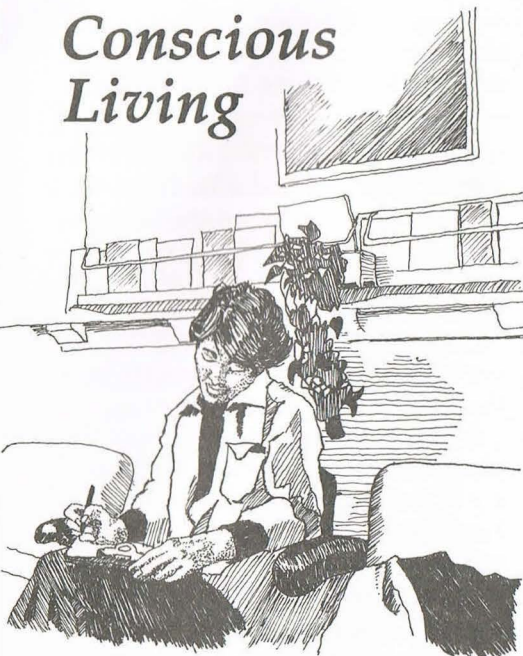
This blurb could not progress further without a paragraph of thanks to the H&I volunteers and the fellow addicts of N.A. You have taught me how to see life through love. A special thanks to those here in my home group, too. They have been friends when I needed them. If it weren't for them, I don't know what I would have done.

Though I spend some time at the bottom of a wishing well, my God has given me very much, considering the circumstances. He has also shown me that one day at a time is all I can handle. He has shown me a new way to live: the N.A. way.

Thank you for letting me share myself. Until we meet again, keep coming back, it works.

M.F., Arizona

Conscious Living



I've experienced much during the short time I've been in recovery. To put one experience above another would not be fair to my recovery, since everything I've gone through has been necessary.

However, several things happened to me about a year-and-a half ago that have been the foundation upon which I've since based my life.

I had gone through several years in recovery keeping secrets and not sharing them with anybody. These were not only secrets about my past but also about behavior I was currently doing which I was deeply ashamed about.

Even though I was very involved and visible within the N.A. area in which I lived, I was in a state of isolation. I had no intimacy in my life with another human being. I truly felt that if these people knew what I was doing, thinking and feeling, they

would certainly judge and reject me.

Even though I prayed every day to be restored to sanity, I began to feel hopeless, that I would be this way until the day I died. Thoughts of using came and went, and suicide entered my mind on more than one occasion. I became obsessed with several things including food, sex and N.A. Each one of these obsessions was unhealthy for me because I used them to avoid my pain and reality.

One morning I found myself wanting to do a nose dive from about twenty-five feet in the air. Instead I ran to the phone and called my sponsor. Between heaves and sobs, I was able to speak the most honest words I had spoken in years: "I hate myself," I cried into the phone. This simple admission seemed to start a process which is still continuing today.

There was no immediate relief; in fact for the next four to six weeks there was almost no relief. I worked day and night on a Fourth Step which I had started just prior to my admission of self-hate. At times during this Fourth Step I felt immense pain, anger and sadness. I made many phone calls and kept several spiritual books with me at all times.

I continually needed perspective in my life so I would not be overwhelmed with the feelings that were going on inside of me. My first Fourth Step contained much about my using life and the things I had done. This Fourth Step contained much about me as a child, my family life and my life in recovery.

Early in recovery I was told over and over again that addiction was more than drug use, and that drugs

were a symptom of my disease. I have applied my life to this understanding of the First Step from the early days of my recovery. God again revealed to me an even deeper understanding of the First Step.

I could write pages and pages of experiences I've had in the past year-and-a-half regarding a newer understanding of the Steps, but that is not the purpose of this writing. I would like to relate to you about how I found something in me that is untouched by my addiction.

It has been covered up with years of resentments, fear and self-centeredness, but it has been there all along. In the depths of my self-hate, God revealed to me a part of me, or should I say the real me.

I found a child which still lives in me and wants nothing more than to love and to be loved. This child took my hand and introduced me to the loving Spirit in me that I never knew existed. Intellectually I believed in God within, but in practice I had relied on God as revealed to me through others and through the groups.

What my child showed me was a God within me that was pure one hundred percent Love! Untainted by my disease, this Love is all encompassing.

I realized that my addiction lies solely between my ears, and that I am a good person and a wonderful child of God. I learned that I could live consciously and not continuously react to my disease. I began to make decisions as guided by my inner Spirit, and miracles happened.

I still make plenty of mistakes; I still

get angry, I still have defensiveness and fear in my life. I also take risks today in my relationships with people. I allow myself to be vulnerable around my loved ones. I have several people in my life who know all my secrets and they still love and accept me. In fact we are much closer than ever before.

"Between heaves and sobs, I was able to speak the most honest words I had spoken in years: 'I hate myself' I cried into the phone."

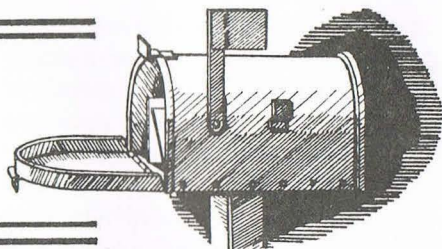
I love my humanness today. At times I am able to embrace my defects as well as my assets and accept them as part of me. This usually doesn't happen for me immediately, but eventually I am able to come to terms with myself and accept me as I am. This enables me to move on with my recovery.

Through conscious living I take responsibility for my recovery and my life. I no longer have to be a victim, at the mercy of the disease or of others around me. I am sorting out my values versus those of my family and/or the society within which I live. I like the values that have been revealed to me, and there is sometimes sadness in the letting go of old values, which had been so safe for me but were not my own.

My life is exciting today as more is revealed to me each day about God, love, myself, and you. I believe I have only touched the tip of what my life can be like, and I am looking forward to much more.

Anonymous, Ohio

From Our Readers



Letters and reflections from N.A. members worldwide.

ACCEPTANCE: TWO VIEWS

From Ontario, Canada: It took me such a long time to accept myself, and all the things I had been a part of. To find a place to put some of those memories was very difficult, because they were so painful at first. Just the very thought of some of them wound my stomach up in a real tight knot of self-loathing and disgust.

Today, with a little bit of clean time under my belt, I can see those experiences for what they were. They were the stepping stones necessary for me to take to find my way to the doors of N.A.

Without some of those awful things happening to me I never would have been desperate enough to change. I'm ever grateful for those experiences, and I'm grateful to the Fellowship for loving me in spite of myself, and to the program for teaching me to love myself. Thanks N.A. You've changed my life.

T.V., Ontario, Canada

From West Virginia: I've recently had an awakening as to how acceptance works for me. I'm sure this will not be new to some people. I wrote it in the hope that someone could use it.

I have been involved in the program on and off for three years and I am just now coming to terms with it.

I had always thought acceptance of someone or something meant feeling comfortable and at peace with it. This is not true for me.

Another addict told me that acceptance was looking at reality and doing the right thing regardless of our feelings. He went on to say that after practicing this for awhile I would receive the peace and comfort I had initially sought.

What a big relief for me! All this time I thought I wasn't accepting things because I didn't like or feel comfortable with them.

Today I am faced with a very painful reality that I may lose someone who is very important to me, and it hurts a lot.

I have resolved not to worry today, and to do what I know is right: go to a meeting, write honestly about my life, share with other addicts, read my Basic Text, and pray to the God of my understanding. As a result of doing these things diligently for a few days, the pain has all but gone. I still want what I want, but that is irrelevant, for I seek God's will today.

D.D., West Virginia

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Today is K.E.'s one year clean. Wow! I can only guess at how good it must feel to be one year clean. I know how good it feels to be just shy of eight months clean, and that is great—but to actually make it through a year... to really leave all that garbage behind... I know I'll make it too; I really want recovery today.

I am powerless over my addiction. I am powerless over the self-destructiveness I set up in myself. God can and will remove it for me, but I have to remain willing. Today I am willing. I want to grow. I want to leave obsession behind.

I want to remain celibate for at least one year. I don't want to harm myself anymore. I know that I am God's child and that he loves me. I need help to love myself. I have come this far and I have let go of a lot of old ideas. I need help to let go and let God even further. I need my Higher Power in my life today more than ever.

I imagine that as you recover, you really have to keep in constant touch with God because it is so easy to forget how sick we got. But with my God working through the people in the program and the Twelve Steps, I will recover, one day at a time.

I have just watched myself go through three weeks of living in fantasy land. I wasn't living in yesterday or tomorrow, the program has taught me not to do that. But my disease, cunning and powerful, found a loophole. "We'll go to Disneyland" it said, and that's where we were. It is so dangerous for me to be anywhere but in the moment.

I am so grateful for the friends I have in N.A., because they sustained

me through this difficult period. I didn't have to go through it alone and I didn't have to use.

It's true—I am no longer alone; and I found through this experience that they really do love me. They do care. And it reminded me that I am a "lovable" person. That I am "worthwhile."

I have spent twenty-seven years telling myself that I am no good. Seven or eight months clean cannot completely repair the damage I've done to myself, but it can and does teach me that I can change the way I feel about myself and just about everything else in my life. I am so grateful to N.A. for you have changed my life.

T.V., Toronto-Ontario

KNOW PAIN - KNOW GAIN

Through the Fellowship of N.A. I learned many things. I became aware more and more of myself when I worked the Twelve Steps. N.A. gave me one promise, the freedom from active addiction, which came as I worked the Steps with a sponsor.

In my recovery I'd like to say I've had some of God's blessings. God showed me I could survive with the help of other addicts; I've had to go through a death of a friend, to pray every day for a member of my family who was using, to watch my mother go through open heart surgery, to watch my dad go through a total hip replacement.

God also showed me that I could survive the ending of a five-year relationship; that I could survive being of support to a friend who is dying and a brother-in-law diagnosed with a curable disease. God showed me I could survive staying up until 2 a.m. at a

convention, and God also showed me I'm not super woman.

Through the years of recovery I have learned how to deal with reality. I've learned that it's okay to feel sorrow for my dad who has not yet healed a year later from surgery and is a lot of pain. I learned that I can comfort him and comfort my mother during these stressful times. I learned I can be there for them as they always were there for me. I learned how to be a good sister-in-law by offering unconditional love to my brother-in-law. I learned how to be a friend, and in times of sickness give so freely what was so freely given to me. I learned how to let go of a sick relationship for a healthy one. And to find that God replaced the loss of a relationship with a recovering sister.

God has given me everything I need to survive today. N.A. has shown me a God, and the Twelve Steps have taught me all I know. My Basic Text was always there to get me through a struggle, and it was you people who told me it will be okay.

How can I give back what was so freely given to me? Do what I'm doing now, among other things—write to the N.A. Way. I love you.

N.E., New Jersey

THANK YOU J.D.

I am writing you to thank J.D. from New Jersey for the article "A Letter from a Recovering Purist." I am a North Carolinian and was a "purist" before the phrase ever was heard of around here. I, like J.D., was proud of our Fellowship (and still am). What I can see now is some of that "pride" may have harmed some people in the

form of my self-righteousness.

I am not different in my views today, although I no longer openly chastise people during meetings for their use of words. Recovery was not a new way of using words for me, rather a new way of life freely given to me by *loving* people until I was able to love myself. Oh, and by the way, when I got clean six years ago there was no N.A. or Basic Text around here. And I seem to remember using a different set of words at the place I got clean!

I guess what I am trying to say is thank God and N.A. for allowing me the gift of open-mindedness.

Love ya, need ya.

P.C., North Carolina

I could appreciate and chuckle a little at "Recovering Purist's" article. I too believe that I have one disease called addiction that can't be separated into different little compartments according to each drug. (I was never too particular anyway when I was using). I also feel that our particular language describes most accurately the N.A. concepts and philosophy of addiction and recovery.

Although I came to N.A. through another Fellowship, I've found that N.A. meets all my needs today to treat the disease called addiction. I also feel that just as adults who are on their own visit their parents occasionally, I can, without fear of any difficulty, visit that other Fellowship, if for no other reason than to say thank you and show my love and support to old friends. Often I can also share the N.A. way to other addicts who find their way to that other Fellowship initially, just as I did.

I do very definitely feel, however,

that a debt of gratitude is owed and don't cringe when that gratitude is expressed. Mature, independent children usually remember a debt of gratitude to parents who imparted to them certain values and traditions, and I believe that we—the N.A. Fellowship—are mature and independent enough today to remember what we owe to those who came before.

I am grateful to the member of Alcoholics Anonymous who told me about Narcotics Anonymous and took me to my first N.A. meeting. I am grateful to the early members of A.A. who first put into writing our precious Twelve Steps and Traditions. I am grateful to the A.A.'s who in many areas of the country helped addicts start the first N.A. meetings.

Finally, I can't help but be grateful when I read the small print at the bottom of the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous which states, "Reprinted for adaptation by permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc."

In Fellowship,

D.B., Virginia

THE BIRTHDAY PARTY

My daughter thought you might like my thoughts on N.A. for your publication.

My words speak for themselves of my gratitude toward an organization such as yours. You didn't exist in the earlier days and how we needed you!

My daughter invited me to her Narcotics Anonymous meeting where she was going to celebrate her first birthday. The meeting was alive with a number of people greeting one another, embracing, catching one an

other's glance—a waved hello. The moment came when the leader called for those whose birthday it was: 1 week, 1 month, 6 months, 1 year. ONE YEAR! We all saluted our celebrants with our clapping hands. Tears flowed as I watched my daughter's shining, proud face. It had been *such a long journey*

There was magic in that group. I felt it envelop me. There was total acceptance; there was acclamation, and the freedom to grow. The unity was so *powerful*. I felt the presence of love and self-discipline in all its majesty; and I became suffused with joy and gratitude.

This was the most wonderful birthday party I had ever attended. The gifts were those of life.

M.K., Ohio

JUST FOR TODAY PRAYER

The prayer below was written in response to a Fellowshipwide dispute regarding the use of a prayer clearly associated with a particular religion to end our meetings. In much of the rest of the Fellowship, especially in other parts of the world where religions are more diverse than they are in the U.S., they are now closing meetings with "Just for Today" or the Serenity Prayer.

I have also been to other meetings where they have written their own closing sayings. God and I wrote this prayer after we open-mindedly listened to another addict share the reasons for the Fellowship's need to at least look at another change in our ways so that recovery will be available to all, regardless of religion. This prayer was written by an addict for

addicts, and I believe that it was spiritually inspired.

The present prayer that we close with means a lot to me, and I have written about how each line of it applies to my own program; I have read books about it, and I have loved it much of my life. All of these facts aside, when references are made like Lord's Prayer, Our father, Art in Heaven, thy kingdom come, for thine, amen, etc., It becomes undeniable, it seems to me, that this prayer is clearly religious.

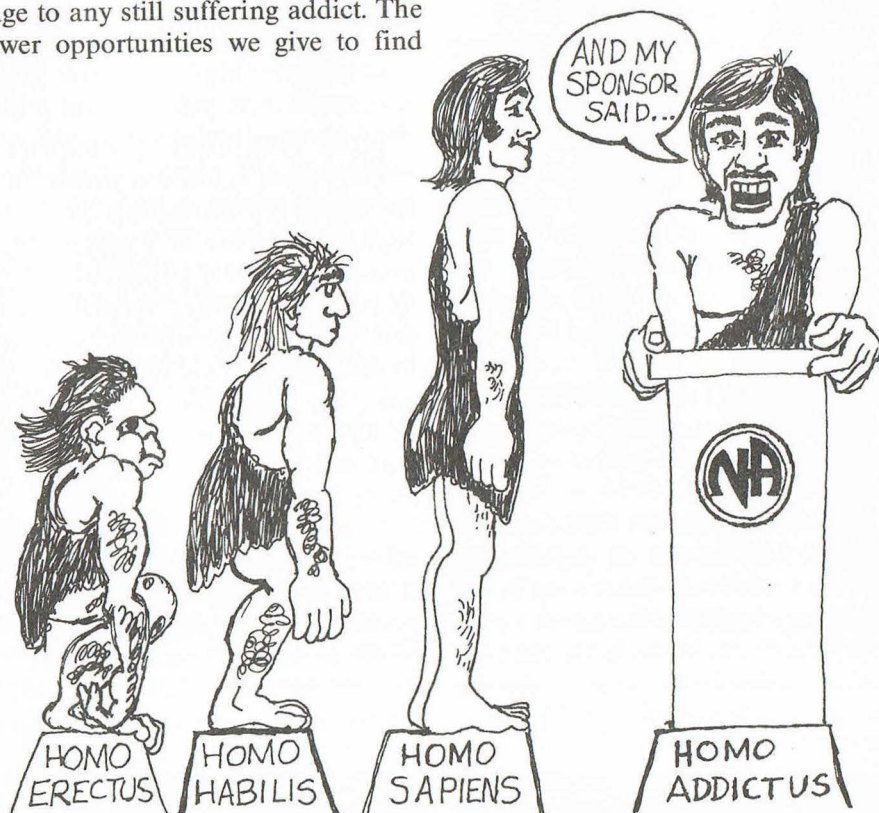
Together we might produce a prayer by our Fellowship, for our Fellowship, and *unique* to our Fellowship. I believe that this could be another step in helping us to better carry the message to any still suffering addict. The fewer opportunities we give to find

differences or stigmas within our Fellowship the greater the chance that no addict seeking recovery need die without having had a chance to find a better way of life.

Here is my input toward that end:

Our God—as we understand Him, and find Him as we choose—our will we surrender; His will be done, as found through our Steps. Give us today our daily program, and relive us our defects, as we learn unconditional love, and free us from our obsessions, but guide us from shortcomings. For this God-given Fellowship, the love and the freedom, just for today, thank God for N.A.! Keep coming back, it works!

Anonymous, Ohio



N.A. NEWS

The World Service Conference was held in Van Nuys California in April of 1987. This is an annual week-long event at which representatives from N.A. regions around the world meet together with the chairpersons of the various World Service Conference Committees and the members of the Board of Trustees to set Fellowshipwide policy and take action on this year's agenda.

For this first installment of N.A. News we will summarize many of the highlights of the Conference, and give updates on some of the developments since the Conference was held. A Fellowship Report has been published since then as well, so we will use excerpts from that and the WSC minutes as our source material this month. The Fellowship Report is published bimonthly and sent to all regional and area committees.

What follows is not an attempt to cover all the issues, but just to touch on some of the highlights.

WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE

Literature

The major agenda item for the Literature Committee was the proposed approval of the book *It Works: How and Why*. The Conference elected not to approve the book. Instead, an ad hoc committee was formed by the Conference to devote its full attention to that project.

The stated purpose of the ad hoc committee is "to collect worldwide input and foster the group conscience process. After input is gathered by this ad hoc committee it will be presented to the World Literature Committee to complete the job" (WSC Minutes, 1987 p. 40).

The ad hoc committee is to be composed of twenty-four members: twelve RSR's, four Trustees, four members of the WSO Board and four members of the World Literature Committee. They are to hold "a series of open workshops for the collection of input, communications, taped input, and recorded workshop meetings."

"In order to form a basis of discussion, both the original blue copy and the recent white approval copy would be published as a review form literature and made available through regional and area literature committees."

"The intent of the motion is to ensure full and practical Fellowship participation on a geographically worldwide basis. This is our book, our recovery related material, and our chance to express the group conscience of the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship in print" (all quotes are from the above cited minutes).

Some of the other Literature Committee business included action on the Fourth Step guide in progress and some statements regarding the Little White Booklet.

In 1983 the Conference approved a guide to the Fourth Step. Some objections to that guide were raised at the following year's Conference, where it was decided that that piece would no longer be made available. There had been some ambiguity during the ensu-

ing three years as to whether that item is now considered unapproved, or simply no longer for sale by the WSO. To clarify this, the 1987 World Service Conference adopted a motion declaring the 1983 Fourth Step guide *unapproved*.

Also related to the Fourth Step guide project, the work in progress entitled *Working Step Four in Narcotics Anonymous* was advanced from the review stage to the approval stage at this year's Conference.

During the review stage, literature committees around the Fellowship hold workshops to provide input on the current draft in the ongoing effort to produce a final draft for approval by the Fellowship. That final draft—the approval form—is then circulated among the Fellowship for a year before it's considered for final approval by the Conference.

Perhaps the best way to describe what happened concerning the Little White Booklet is to simply quote directly from the 1987 WSC Minutes, page 25: A lengthy discussion was held at the request of the WSC Chair, which "centered on the changes made in the Little White Booklet at WSC 1986 and the resulting disharmony experienced by a particular region.

"Many issues regarding this problem were brought forward. Some of these were the procedure used to change the White Booklet, the actual time the Fellowship had to study the changes, the unanimity of last year's decision, putting the changes back on the WSC Agenda for the coming year, failure of the membership to review the material in the Conference Agenda Report, and others.

"Several times the Conference par-

ticipants took action on resolutions and asked that these near unanimous declarations be included here. There was only one objection from the 76 participants. These declarations are as follows [still quoting]:

1. That those groups still using the old White Booklet please stop and respect the decision of the Fellowship.
2. That the existing White Booklet (Newly Revised) approved at the Conference last year (1986), is the only White Booklet approved by the Fellowship.

"After this lengthy session, the WSC participants proceeded with the business at hand."

Policy

Rather than go into detail about the Policy Committee's motions and agenda items, which are complex, and are covered more extensively in reports circulated within the service structure, we'll cover just one of their agenda items for the coming year.

Policy is in the process of studying and preparing to make proposals to the Fellowship regarding guidelines for the formation of new regions. This includes both the formation of regions where none has existed before, and the splitting of existing regions into more than one region.

In the past these have been confusing issues, and there is plenty of experience throughout the Fellowship that may help the committee develop the clearest, most helpful proposals possible. Therefore you are asked to direct your written input on these matters to the Policy Committee Chairperson at the WSO address on page one of this

magazine.

Hospitals and Institutions

The major items brought to the Conference by the H&I Committee regarded their funding. At the Committee's request, the WSC took action to remove from all literature any mention of the H&I can.

"The H&I can" refers to a past policy of encouraging N.A. groups to take a second collection at meetings to raise money for use by H&I. Groups and service committees are no longer encouraged to engage in this practice, but rather to fund the H&I efforts through the regular N.A. fund flow channels.

The H&I Committee also brought a motion to the Conference requesting that a 30% discount be granted by the WSO for all literature to be used for H&I purposes. That motion was not carried, but was sent back to the committee for more review.

A third matter concerning H&I and funding pertained to a special fund maintained by the WSO H&I Project Coordinator. This fund contained money donated from within the Fellowship to be used to for H&I purposes. A motion was adopted that did away with the special fund.

Public Information

Most of the items addressed by the Public Information Committee at this year's Conference were matters of committee design and procedure. There was at least one matter they addressed, though, that will be of general interest.

The P.I. committee received the go-

ahead from the Fellowship at this Conference to plan a Fellowshipwide census. You may recall that a few years back this was tried, and was met with some resistance from members who resented having no warning and insufficient explanation. Before attempting to devote a great deal of time to such a project again, the committee asked the Fellowship for, and received, their support for the concept.

World Convention

There were only two bids this year for the placement of the 1988 World Convention, one from Northern California and one from Southern California. The Northern California bid prevailed.

Subsequent to the Conference, however, a problem arose. The facility in which the Northern California people were planning to hold the event became unavailable to the committee. The World Convention Corporation and the Host Committee members tried to find another site in Northern California which would be adequate to hold such a large event.

After searching and discussion, it was decided that the best course of action would be to place the convention in the Southern California location instead. As a result of this development, the World Convention of 1988 will be held in Anaheim, California.

The World Convention Corporation brought other motions to the Conference which were adopted regarding their guidelines. Rather than focus on those here, we will just include a reminder about the upcoming World

ing three years as to whether that item is now considered unapproved, or simply no longer for sale by the WSO. To clarify this, the 1987 World Service Conference adopted a motion declaring the 1983 Fourth Step guide *unapproved*.

Also related to the Fourth Step guide project, the work in progress entitled *Working Step Four in Narcotics Anonymous* was advanced from the review stage to the approval stage at this year's Conference.

During the review stage, literature committees around the Fellowship hold workshops to provide input on the current draft in the ongoing effort to produce a final draft for approval by the Fellowship. That final draft—the approval form—is then circulated among the Fellowship for a year before it's considered for final approval by the Conference.

Perhaps the best way to describe what happened concerning the Little White Booklet is to simply quote directly from the 1987 WSC Minutes, page 25: A lengthy discussion was held at the request of the WSC Chair, which "centered on the changes made in the Little White Booklet at WSC 1986 and the resulting disharmony experienced by a particular region.

"Many issues regarding this problem were brought forward. Some of these were the procedure used to change the White Booklet, the actual time the Fellowship had to study the changes, the unanimity of last year's decision, putting the changes back on the WSC Agenda for the coming year, failure of the membership to review the material in the Conference Agenda Report, and others.

"Several times the Conference par-

ticipants took action on resolutions and asked that these near unanimous declarations be included here. There was only one objection from the 76 participants. These declarations are as follows [still quoting]:

1. That those groups still using the old White Booklet please stop and respect the decision of the Fellowship.
2. That the existing White Booklet (Newly Revised) approved at the Conference last year (1986), is the only White Booklet approved by the Fellowship.

"After this lengthy session, the WSC participants proceeded with the business at hand."

Policy

Rather than go into detail about the Policy Committee's motions and agenda items, which are complex, and are covered more extensively in reports circulated within the service structure, we'll cover just one of their agenda items for the coming year.

Policy is in the process of studying and preparing to make proposals to the Fellowship regarding guidelines for the formation of new regions. This includes both the formation of regions where none has existed before, and the splitting of existing regions into more than one region.

In the past these have been confusing issues, and there is plenty of experience throughout the Fellowship that may help the committee develop the clearest, most helpful proposals possible. Therefore you are asked to direct your written input on these matters to the Policy Committee Chairperson at the WSO address on page one of this

magazine.

Hospitals and Institutions

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Convention in New Orleans, WCCNA-17.

Pre-registrations are pouring in at this writing. It is expected that by the time you read this the "Midnight Boat Ride" will be sold out, but that there will still be plenty of opportunity for you to register for everything else. The pre-registration deadline, indicated on all the fliers, is August 1. For most of you reading this, that date will have passed already.

The New Orleans host committee is "jazzed" about the event they're planning, and they look forward to treating Y'all to a New Orleans good time.

International Committee

The I.C. had only one agenda item for consideration by the Conference this year. They requested to be disbanded as a committee. They felt that the tasks that they were originally designed to accomplish were better handled by the World Service Office, and that there was no longer a need for an International Committee. That motion carried, eliminating the International Committee from the Conference structure.

World Service Office

As always, the WSO report was very long and involved. Here are a few highlights.

The motions to expand this magazine were part of the WSO's Conference Agenda. Those have been discussed plenty in previous issues.

The following motion was made and carried: "That the WSO Board, in conjunction with the WSC Adminis-

trative Committee, prepare a report for the Fellowship as a whole on the possibility and impact of reducing the price of our Basic Text and Informational Pamphlets by 25%. Included in this report will be the impact on our services world-wide and possible solutions to any adverse effect that this reduction in price would create in our ability to carry out our Fifth Tradition. This report will be made to the Fellowship by October 1, 1987" (p. 7).

This report is being prepared at this time, and is expected to be presented to the Fellowship by the October deadline.

Another major news item stemming from the WSO's business at the Conference involves the printing of a paperback version of the Basic Text. A motion requesting this was adopted by the Conference, and this form of our book is expected to be available later this year.

The WSO also announced that as of this Conference the Basic Text is now available on audio cassette tape. See the WSO catalog, call or write the WSO to inquire further about this.

Additional Needs

The following motion carried, which established the existence of this committee: "To establish an ad hoc committee at the World Service Conference, to investigate and disperse the current information on the accessibility of N.A. meetings to those individuals from whom the message of recovery is limited, impaired or inaccessible due to physical, audiological or linguistic difficulties or handicaps." (p. 17)

Select Committee

The Select Committee presented to the Conference its revised work-in-progress, *A Guide To Service in Narcotics Anonymous*. The following motion carried, which outlines the timetable for completion of this work: "At the WSC quarterly in July, 1987, an open forum meeting will be held by the Select Committee to answer questions, receive input on the draft, and to otherwise have a general evaluation of the work. The Select Committee will receive additional written input from the Fellowship until December 1, 1987. The committee will meet to consider input and to propose any further changes to the draft that are warranted from the input. This completed work will be sent out to the Fellowship in approval form by July 1, 1988 for consideration at WSC '89" (p. 40).

FELLOWSHIP REPORT

The central theme that ran through every report in the Fellowship Report was that the World Service Conference is broke. We will cover some specifics about that as we touch on each report, but let's begin with some comments made by the Conference Administrative Committee members. Their reports spoke most directly to the financial crisis.

A separate report on this subject is now being prepared, and will likely be printed in the *N.A. Way* in full upon its completion.

Conference Finances

The Conference Treasurer began

his report with the following paragraph, which most succinctly sums up the financial problem:

"This is the final report for the fiscal year ending May 31, 1987. The Conference currently has a cash balance of approximately \$5,400. The office has recently sent the WSC a bill totaling almost \$21,000, and first quarter expenditures could run as high as \$15,000—\$20,000. I don't feel I need to say anymore about the financial condition of the Conference, the numbers speak for themselves."

Here are some excerpts from the Administrative Committee's report:

"During the Joint Administrative Committee meeting, June 6-9, the major topic of discussion centered on how the Conference should respond to the present financial situation. Through these discussions we were able to come up with some short-term and some long-term plans.

"It is evident that we need to show prudence in our Fellowship's financial affairs. We can't expect the Conference to function without adequate funding, and the Conference cannot expect the Fellowship to support an unreasonably fat budget. We have made several decisions which will cut this year's Conference budget by approximately \$77,000. This budget cut by itself will not ensure the financial security of the Conference. We will all need to take a good, hard look at how ineffective our current fund flow system is and proceed swiftly towards a solution.

"In addition to the budget cuts, all the Conference Committees and Boards were asked to prioritize their agendas. This was an added precau-

tion in the event that the Conference continues to face inadequate funding. It may be necessary to extend some agenda items and projects to two or three years. This will eventually be determined by our own ability to support and finance the ongoing work and projects of our World Service Conference.

"There seem to be several alternatives. The first is to substantially reduce the expenditures of the Conference by reducing the work or shifting the direct costs to those trusted servants who do the work. The second alternative is to promote a better understanding of the work the Conference is doing, its relationship to the Twelfth Tradition and every member in a long range effort to increase contributions to the WSC. The third alternative is to obtain a direct subsidy from the WSO with no intention of repaying the funds they advance."

"The WSO has assisted the activities of the Conference in previous years with money for specific projects when requested. This current form of assistance is a change from assistance on specific items to general financial assistance. The WSO is willing to comply with this need providing such expenditures do not negatively affect the responsibilities and projects of the WSO. The WSO is willing to even delay some of their expenditures to accommodate the interim financial needs of the Conference."

"The proper long range effort however should be to increase WSC income from contributions from the Fellowship. More information on this will soon be available when the report mentioned earlier is completed."

The Chairperson had this to say:

"What I want to convey to you goes a little beyond facts and figures. It concerns our Seventh Tradition. It also has to do with our responsibility, generosity and trust, as well as our greed, fear and self-centeredness.

"Lack of financial support from the Fellowship will cut WSC services dramatically. If we are to continue our work, we will need the support from our Fellowship.

"In spite of the fact that we are hurting financially, we are bound to remain self-supporting, declining outside contributions, according to our Seventh Tradition. This tradition reminds me that I need to be aware of certain responsibilities I have as a member, to support the continuation and growth of Narcotics Anonymous. One of my responsibilities is to increase the awareness of other members to the financial needs of our Fellowship."

"Our service committees and boards have been inundated with work this year. We have WSC Committee workshop meetings to hold, copying, postage, other administrative costs and we can't meet these needs."

"All of the WSC Committees have been directed by the Conference participants, to work on projects which will benefit all of N.A. They will not be able to accomplish anything without the emotional, spiritual and financial support from the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous."

Public Information

An item that should be of general interest was brought out in the report from the P.I. Committee Chairperson. Here is a portion:

"The WSC P.I. Committee has ... agreed unanimously that personal stories are not always an appropriate vehicle to use in providing information about our program to non-addicts.

Our stories are useful during our meetings to provide identification to other addicts, but not always in our contacts with non-N.A.'s during P.I. activities. They do not, in all cases, appear to be appropriate in our presentations in schools, and may actually do a disservice in presenting Narcotics Anonymous to certain segments of the general population. Although there may always be a need to speak to non-N.A.'s about our individual experiences in a limited manner, that sharing needs to be quite different from what we are used to in our meetings."

Hospitals and Institutions

The following is one excerpt from the H&I committee's report: "We felt, as a committee, that our main goal for the 87-88 Conference year is to solicit input from the Fellowship on a total rewrite of our handbook to be a more comprehensive guide, and to allow for a separation between carrying the message to treatment and to correctional institutions.

"The committee has been broken down into five ad-hoc committees. They will develop materials on treatment, correctional, general H&I work, committee structure and function, and workshops and learning days.

"The treatment section will cover information about doing H&I service work in long and short term treatment centers, detoxes, psychiatric units, methadone clinics, recovery houses, half and 3/4 way houses, from initial

contacts with facility administrators to setting up meetings; also Do's and Don'ts in treatment.

"The correctional section will cover information about doing H&I service work in correctional facilities from initial contacts with facility administrators to setting up the meeting itself, as well as Do's and Don'ts in correctional settings. The general H&I work section will cover information on general H&I service issues. The section on committee structure and function will cover H&I committees at the area, regional, and world levels, panel systems, commitment, and the responsibilities of being a committee member.

"The section on learning days and workshops will cover information on the setup and structures for learning days, as well as assorted information which could be included in a learning day. This division will give information about all levels of H&I service, and provide a more thorough look at guidelines for all institutional settings.

"If you have input for any of the ad-hoc committees please submit it to the WSC H&I Committee, c/o the H&I Project Coordinator at the WSO."

Comin' Up



This space has been reserved for coming events anywhere in N.A. If you wish to list an event, send us a flier or note at least two months in advance. Include title, location, P.O. Box, dates, contacts.

CALIFORNIA: Sept 19; Stanislav Valley Area Celebration; Elks Lodge, 945 McHenry, Modesto, CA; (209) 524-4421; Ken 634-3197; Ron 529-6728

2) Oct 30-Nov 1; 9th Annl So CA Reg Conv; Anaheim Hilton Towers, 777 W Convention Way, Anaheim, CA; Bob (714) 540-0668; Vallerie (213) 370-8052

CANADA: Oct 23-25; 10th PNWCNA; Interested speakers submit tapes to PNWCNA Box 468-810, West Broadway, Vancouver, BC V5Z 4C9; (604) Wendy 294-9016; Brant 254-9094

COLORADO: Oct 23-25; CRCNA-I; Antler Hotel, Colorado Springs; (303) Julie 321-8930; Jeff 755-6813; George 830-7811

LOUISIANA: Sept 3-6; World Convention; WCNA 17; Sheraton New Orleans Hotel & Towers, 500 Canal St, New Orleans, LA 70130; (504) 525-2500

MINNESOTA: Aug 7-9; Willmar Campout; Willmar, MN; (612) 253-

NEBRASKA: Oct 9-11; NRCNA IV; Holiday Inn, 72nd Grover, Omaha; 1-800-HOLIDAY; PO Box 3532, Omaha, NE 68103

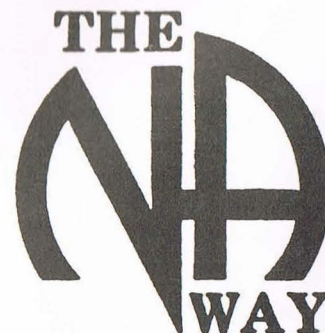
NEVADA: Aug 27-30; 5th Annual Stampede for Serenity Campout; Stampede Reservoir; (702) 322-4811

PENNSYLVANIA: Oct 9-11; TSRCNA V; Hyatt Hotel, Pittsburgh; (412) Ken 521-1086; Roz 361-6250; Rich 371-3891

2) Mar 25-27; GPRCNA-6; Adams Mark Hotel, City Line and Monument Ave.; For reservations call 800-231-5858; Contacts: Steve: (215) 342-0114, Dennis (215) 423-1761.

VIRGINIA: Aug 14-16; 1st Mini Convention; 4-H Educational Center, Route 522 South, Front Royal, VA; (703) Pat 667-9312; Bill 662-4418; Kevin; Rob (304) 267-4418; Bob (301) 797-3563;

WISCONSIN: Oct 23-25; WSNAC IV; PO Box 1688, Oshkosh, WI 54902-1688; If interested in speaking or chairing workshops, submit speaker tapes for consideration. (414) Gene, Phil or Steve 231-6219



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OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

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THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on N.A. unity.
For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving
2. 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.
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.
6. Every N.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
7. Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
8. N.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
9. Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the N.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
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.
10. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.
- 11.
- 12.

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