

THE NA Way MAGAZINE®

June 1993

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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 NA Way[®]

M A G A Z I N E

Box 9999
Van Nuys CA 91409
(818) 780-3951

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The NA Way Magazine welcomes the participation of its readers. You are invited to share with the entire NA Fellowship in our monthly international journal. Send us your experience in recovery, your views on NA matters, and feature items. All manuscripts submitted become the property of World Service Office, Inc.

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Healing families

I will never forget that day in 1973. I was sixteen and angry. Wasn't everybody? I walked into the dining room and there was my mother, standing with her arms folded, looking like she didn't want anything to do with me.

My dad was in the same room, looking down, not wanting to meet my eyes. I walked past them and went to get my things. That was the last time I saw them.

In 1985, twelve years later, I was twenty-eight years old and had three years in recovery. I had worked Steps One through Nine. Well . . . almost. I had not yet made amends to my parents, and it was eating me up. My sponsor was out of town and I couldn't wait any longer. Isn't that the way it always goes with us? I wrote a one-page letter of amends, showed it to another addict to make sure it was God-driven, not self-driven, and then mailed it to my parents. I was relieved it was done. I had finally made my amends.

What a blessing my parents are in my life today. We stayed in touch after I made my amends, even though I was 3,000 miles away. I visited frequently and, finally, last year, I moved here and lived with my folks in their home for almost a year. Next to God getting me clean, having a relationship with my parents is the best gift I have received. I am a lot like them: humorous, lovable, kind, and giving.

NA has taught me to see those things about myself. NA has taught me how to treat others. I watched other addicts as their kindness and love created friends and community. I wanted that. So I took the risk, asked for help, and it brought me back home to a place I had sworn I would never return. Thank you for the gift of recovery and for my life.

PS, Massachusetts

Why am I so lonely?

Despite everything this program has to offer, I still find myself drowning in loneliness and despair at times. When big things go wrong, negative feelings again overwhelm me, and I am back where I was at the beginning. During these moments, the self-abusing, damaging emotions of self-hatred, fear, and rage become much stronger than the joy I've known in recovery—so much stronger that all the suggestions, slogans, step work, and friends put together still don't balance things out. Again, I am in terrible pain. And I don't like to feel pain.

When a relationship to which I was committed body and soul fell apart not too long ago, I tried to stop the pain through a desperate suicide attempt. In recovery, I had hit yet another bottom.

But why am I so lonely? Why did I need the validation of another person so badly to feel loved? Why did the loss of this intensely painful relationship fill me with such terror at the thought of going on with my life?

The answer is simple, if not very pleasant: I am an addict. After a few years in recovery, I was starting to forget just what that means.

The disease I suffer from is characterized by obsessive thinking and compulsive behavior, by an overwhelming need for something. It can be anything. Sometimes, the object of an obsession is obviously destructive, as it was with drugs; sometimes it's not obvious at all. Sometimes, an obsession begins as a subtle desire to do something positive, just because doing it feels good.

In recovery, I have found myself compulsively overextending myself in service to our fellowship, in expensive dinners, in taking cabs everywhere in a rush, in working late hours at my job, in buying clothes I didn't really need, and in constantly complaining about my day's petty problems every night on the phone until all hours. Each of these things make me feel better, and by themselves they are harmless enough activities.

Because I was so busy doing so many of these "positive, estimable" things, I appeared to others to be "working a good program." I believed it myself, despite the little voice within that whispered words of truth. What I was actually doing was desperately running away from myself, and using the program to do it. I reveled in the approval of the select few I chose to surround myself with and in the praise I often received from the fellowship for my service work. I lost myself in service and my job so I wouldn't have to learn how to love myself, much less how to truly love another person.

Having lost the desire to use drugs years ago, I believed that the things I used in recovery to get out of myself were okay. As long as I did as much

as I possibly could in one day to avoid looking at myself and my actions, I was okay.

And then I "fell in love" with someone exactly like me. I slowly began to fall apart.

Addiction to a person is the ultimate addiction. Whether we call it that, or codependency, or passionate love, it is the most dangerous of all the manifestations of my disease. This face of addiction causes people to murder each other, kill their kids or their parents, go up on a building and shoot people at random on the street, or kill themselves—as I tried to do.

The need for another person slowly and subtly builds up inside us, easy to ignore because we can so easily call it "love." Though the object of our "love" may repeatedly disappoint us, hurt us, lie to us, or just be insensitive and indifferent to our needs, we hang in there anyway. Though they may constantly pull away from making a true commitment, we hang in there anyway. Though our sponsor and our support group call us crazy for living in so much pain, we hang in there anyway. And in exactly the same manner in which I denied I had a problem with drugs, I denied I had a problem in my relationship.

It has to get better, we tell ourselves over and over. If only she'd do this, if only he'd do that. And we deny what is obvious to everyone around us, that we've forgotten how to live simply, happily, joyously, and freely.

The program of Narcotics Anonymous is repetitious, thank God, so that even someone as slick, thick, and sick as myself can pick up the pieces of my soul and try again to recover.

Soon after my failed suicide attempt, I walked into a step meeting and heard someone read the Seventh Step from the Basic Text. It was exactly what I needed to hear.

Boy, was that ever right on the money. The trouble was in me, and the solution has been freely given to me in the same program that had saved me before. My HP not only saved my life again, He was talking to me loud and clear, and had been all along.

Why was I so lonely? Because I had stopped looking at myself, taking suggestions, making meetings, and trusting in the process no matter what. Why was I so miserable? Because I chose to act on my self-destructive defects of character instead of using my HP and the program to work through them to grow. I was alone and lonely because I chose to overlook that NA means never alone. In short, I was lonely because I chose to be lonely.

I still hurt a lot. I still grieve the loss of what was good in that relationship, and I'll probably feel this way for a long while yet. But it will pass. I don't have to kill myself because one person doesn't "love me enough" or "care enough about me to stick by me." I have a loving and caring Higher Power and a worldwide fellowship of beautiful, loving people just as willing to love me today as they were on the day when I first walked into the rooms. Embracing my recovery with all my heart, despite the pain I am in, I am not alone anymore. Just for today, I choose to live.

Anonymous

The second promise of Narcotics Anonymous

In Chapter Ten of the Basic Text, "More Will Be Revealed," we are told that "Narcotics Anonymous offers only one promise and that is freedom from active addiction. . . ." For the first seven-and-a-half years of my recovery, I believed this and repeated it often. Through the gift of recovery I have experienced many rewards and spiritual awakenings. Recently I had the good fortune to hear a speaker at an NA activity. What I heard that speaker talk about was "the second promise of NA." I am sure that at this point many readers are feeling like I did. "What heresy is this?" I thought, "Doesn't the speaker know that NA has only one promise?"

Well, because I have learned to listen and today have the spiritual principle of open-mindedness in my life, I sat back and listened. Through listening and opening myself to learn, I was able to hear what was said. My purpose in this writing is to share what I heard and now believe. The

ironic part of this is that probably every member of NA has heard about "the second promise of NA" at every meeting they have attended throughout their recovery. I had certainly heard it, but I had not recognized it. Today I know that it is real.

The second promise of NA is made in Step Twelve. It is so clearly true that I am amazed I had not recognized this in the past. The beauty is that I have been able to accept what I intrinsically knew to be true through the experiences of my own personal recovery. The Twelfth Step promises me that I will experience a spiritual awakening as a result of living and working the steps of Narcotics Anonymous. The step says, "Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps . . ." What an uplifting belief we have been freely given!

NA promises us that if we work and live our steps, we will experience a spiritual awakening. This promise has been and continues to be fulfilled in my life. This has occurred through a lot of hard work. There's no promise that it will be easy, just that it will occur. I would like to share how this promise has come true for me.

The first promise, freedom from active addiction, began to come true in my life on April 15, 1985 in New Orleans, Louisiana. At this time and place, through what I believe was the intercession of the God of my understanding, I was introduced to NA and the Twelve Steps. Maybe I was lucky but from Day One I heard the message that recovery was attainable only through the steps. Today I believe that the process of recovery

brings about the restoration of the relationships in our life. The goal of recovery is to be the very best person that I can be. I now know that Step Five tells us the order, through the steps, in which we restore our relationships: first with God, then with ourselves, and then with other human beings.

In the first Three Steps, by establishing a relationship with the God of our understanding, we create a foundation for our recovery. In these steps,

If my God
could love me
unconditionally,
how could I not
do the same

I was introduced to various spiritual principles. Though I was cold-hearted, nearly dead spiritually, I began to practice these principles. With that, my spiritual awakening began.

I now had in my life, although far from totally or perfectly, surrender, admittance, and acceptance. These were quickly followed by hope and faith, which promptly evolved into trust—trust in NA and in my God. I had gone from a despairing, hopeless, untrusting, godless person filled with despair to someone filled with hope who could trust. What a miracle!

With this strong foundation to support me and my growing ability to

trust, I began my recovery in earnest. I began, in Steps Four through Seven, to develop a relationship with myself. My spirit was further refreshed as I experienced honesty, courage, thoroughness, willingness, and humility. I could be honest, brave, and willing. This was wondrous!

After finishing my Sixth Step, I had a defining moment in my spiritual awakening. For the first time, I knew what humility was. It was simple yet absolutely inspiring. My God is majestic and could do for me what I could not do for myself. Most importantly, I recognized that I was a human being, no more and no less. I no longer had to feel better or worse than anyone else. I could, if I chose to, accept myself, with all my defects and assets.

What a relief! It was like a millstone had been lifted from my shoulders. Through this newfound self-acceptance I was able to move on to Steps Eight and Nine where I became more willing, understanding, and forgiving. I achieved freedom from guilt. I was able to restore relationships with others.

The changes resulting from these steps allowed me to make restitution for past harm, resolve outstanding issues, and repair many relationships which had been damaged. I became much more willing to understand rather be understood. No longer was I the fearful, hopeless, and harmful addict who had crawled into these rooms. I was different. I was changing.

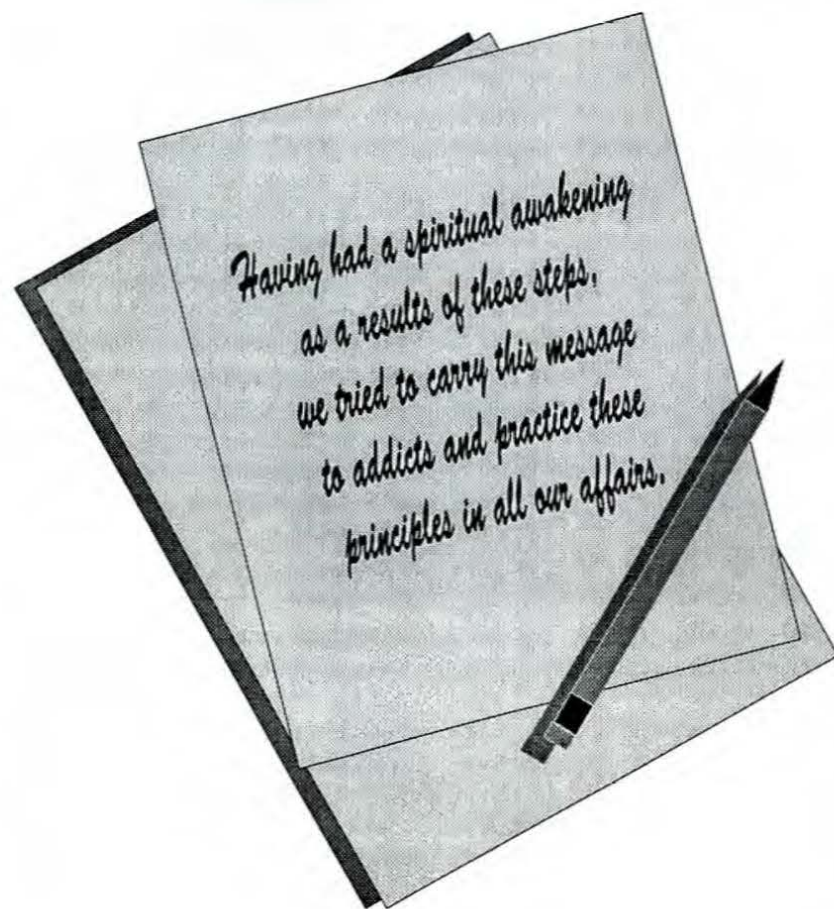
My next defining moment occurred in Step Eleven. What a beautiful step! Unlike the previous ten, the Eleventh Step caused me no pain in its practice.

In the process of seeking to improve my conscious contact with my God, I understood and experienced unconditional love, not only by God for me, but also by me for God, myself, and others. I could no longer justify hatred, intolerance, or prejudice for myself or others. If my God could love me and others unconditionally, how could I be so arrogant as to not, to the best of my ability, do the same?

The spiritual awakening which I had experienced in the first eleven steps had changed me, and I could

acknowledge those changes and revel in their effect. By the time I got to Step Twelve, I knew that I had gotten better. I was spiritually awake. The second promise had, in fact, come true in my life. Today, I continue to practice these principles in all my affairs. As I continue this process, I am experiencing new spiritual awareness which is contributing to increased spiritual growth. How fortunate we addicts are that we have been given this gift of life and spirit from our Higher Power.

JB, New York





A deeper surrender

Freedom, joy, and choices—these are three states of mind and heart I never believed I'd receive as a result of turning my will and life over to the care of the loving God I've met in Narcotics Anonymous.

When I first came around, I was just looking for a safe place to heal my deepest wounds. After that I planned to go back to "using safely" which, of course, I never knew how to do in the first place. Living just for today kept me clean long enough to listen to my new family. They kept telling me, "Just keep coming back; find and use a sponsor; it gets better; you deserve this gift." You meant all those things! And I believed you like I'd never believed the combination of messages I'd received from therapists, doctors, and religions.

Well, it's a little over five years from when I first walked into my new home: NA. This month I've surrendered on a level I never thought was possible. I finally hit bottom with the part of my disease that wants me to

focus all my energy on the getting and using of a mate and finding the ways and means to replace him when he's no longer right. I don't know how to share what a miracle this is for me except to tell you that I'm going through my third divorce while trying to heal from my next failed relationship after the last marriage.

I shared with my sponsor that I'm now starting to become obsessed with someone I met in service work and that I want to do something different. She suggested something I've never tried before and I actually did it. I prayed to have the obsession removed! It worked and continues to work each time I pray for guidance. Only days after my HP and I started this process, a new sponsee with one day clean and a broken heart came into my life. She's staying close by me on a daily basis, and we listen to each other. I follow all the suggestions I give her.

I have faith like I never dreamed was possible and peace of heart and mind. If God has a relationship in

mind for either of us, He will make that perfectly clear in a loving, caring manner at a time and place that is in harmony with our souls. Any conning, manipulating, pushing, or shoving with my self-will, impatience, self-centeredness, and fear will not leave room for any of God's gifts. I'll only hit another self-induced bottom and possibly relapse. None of us ever need pay that price for a broken heart again.

There is a lightness to my service work, my meetings, and my times with my children and friends that I've never felt before. That edge of desperation that I've lived with as a constant companion since I was twelve and first believed that I wasn't good enough to deserve a happy relationship is gone. It feels as good as it did when the craving for drugs first left me. That happened when I hit my knees at about four months clean at the suggestion of my sponsor. Just as I've had to renew that request on a daily basis, so I have to do with this

one. My Sixth and Seventh Steps have become a beautiful gift rather than a curse. My HP gave me the willingness to surrender to love, which is certainly the opposite of obsession and grasping self-centeredness.

It feels like it's time to close this letter to my NA family. You, *The NA Way Magazine*, have become the family I write home to every few months. I can't write to my blood family the way I can to you, and I am so grateful to have a home meeting to which I can write. It's hard to share the specifics in the room where all the people alluded to in this letter are actually sitting. You help me live the Twelfth Tradition of loving anonymity while giving me a place to give away what I've been so freely given.

Anonymous

Miracles happen

I'm sharing my experience in the hope that someone may benefit from it.

I'm not going to say how long I've been clean because I don't want the validity of my experience to be based on how much clean time I have. After all, what is important is getting through a day clean together.

I recently went through a very tough time in my recovery. I'm on the other side of it now, and I was told we can't keep what we have unless we give it away.

In my first year of recovery, I didn't get into a "relationship." That wasn't entirely my choice. I'm in a wonderful relationship now and have been in it for just under a year. Shortly after getting into this relationship, we found out that she had cancer on one of her kidneys. The first feeling I had was not one of gratitude. I wanted to run. I later realized the need to practice acceptance and take things one day at a time. This was not easy with her going through chemotherapy and radiation treatment, not to mention the possibility of losing the most wonderful woman I've ever known.

Later, the chemotherapy took such a toll that she couldn't have it anymore. The other options were radiation or dangerous surgery. Her resistance to infection was very low. Unknown to me, she opted for the surgical removal of the tumor.

To keep me uninformed, she changed her behavior in such a way that I believed she wanted the relationship to end. I moved out. Then I began to feel abandoned and hopeless. I had fears that I just could not succeed in a relationship.

Now comes the message of recovery: I was sitting in my parents' back yard asking my Higher Power to hold me and make the pain go away. Then I went into the house for a while, picked up the telephone, and called another recovering addict. I asked him if he would hang out with me for the weekend after sharing my pain with him. I did not want to be alone. At this point, I realized I was with the worst person in the world to be with: myself! He replied, "No problem." Then we talked for a while about powerlessness.

The next day I went to work, and he showed up to pick me up and take me to a meeting. Before we left, my girlfriend showed up and said, "Too many people are freaking out behind all this." She then told me the truth, but she wouldn't tell me where she was going to have the surgery performed.

Needless to say, I was scared almost crazy. I called another recovering addict who had been through a similar situation and got through it clean. I did a lot of praying during this time, asking that my girlfriend just be okay. Then after talking with a friend, I

realized I wasn't asking for God's will. I realized I was asking for my girlfriend to be okay so she could be a part of my life. The hardest thing for me to do was pray only for knowledge of God's will and the power to carry it out.

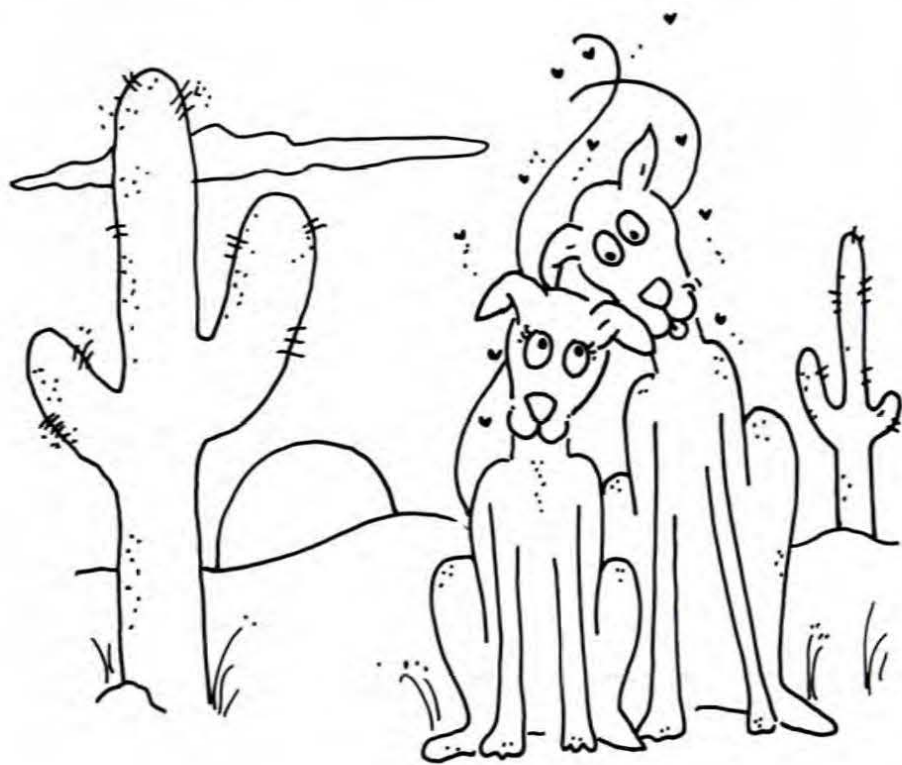
Today, it still isn't real clear to me what God's will is, but maybe that's so I have to keep asking. However, my girlfriend's surgery went very well. It brings me great joy to tell you all that not only is she free of cancer, but I'm still clean.

Looking back, I realized that I had not wanted to use drugs through all this. What I did use was other recovering addicts, principles, the steps, and

faith. Which makes me think of a quote from page 52 of our Basic Text, "The real miracle happens when you realize that the need for drugs has in some way been lifted from you." And from page 18 ". . . the therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel."

If you have any doubts about what this program can do, please keep coming back. The most powerful tool we have here is each other. I'm going to keep coming back, and I hope you all will do the same. Thank you, Narcotics Anonymous.

TA, Washington



Sponsor-sponsee relationship

I am an addict, and what worked for me might work for you. I am clean today by the grace of God and the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. I felt compelled to write after reading "Fired" in the November 1992 issue of *The NA Way*. In my case, I was the one doing the firing.

When I came to NA in April 1990, it was suggested that I keep coming back, go to meetings, and work the steps. After about thirty-five days clean, I chose a sponsor I felt could help me. My sponsor had me read the page ix of the Basic Text. This page talks about our symbol, which is where I believe life really begins.

To get to the point, my sponsor would always say to me, "I am here to guide you through the steps." I respected his honesty and his program.

I remember the day I fired him. I had just become involved in a relationship, and I thought he didn't like my girlfriend. Before I got into the relationship, my sponsor would say to me, "I'm not saying to get in one or not, just be responsible." By being responsible, he meant going to meet-

ings, working the steps, and reading the Basic Text. Well, I conjured up in my own mind a belief that he didn't like my girlfriend. Since he didn't like her, I thought didn't need him. He didn't live up to my expectations. If he couldn't accept her and I being together, than to hell with him.

"You're fired," I said. I told him I was getting another sponsor because he was not giving me what I needed. At the time, I thought this was understanding. The last thing he said to me was, "You will be back." I said under my breath, "I don't think so." He also said, "I will be there if you need me."

When I got to NA I was a real racist. I am white and my sponsor was black. I had eleven months clean when I fired him. Eight months later, I came back and asked him humbly to please sponsor me again. During that eight months, I started to revert

to my sickest behavior. I didn't go to many meetings. I tried to work my girlfriend's program, not my own. I didn't read the Basic Text, and I stopped calling the people closest to me. They all saw me going backward.

When I did go to meetings, other addicts would say hello and hug me, but that was it. My girlfriend relapsed. My new sponsor wanted me to go to other meetings besides NA and I just got all screwed up. I felt like a piece of cheese with a whole bunch of holes in it.

Finally, I picked up the Basic Text and began reading in the Eighth Step the sentence that never made any sense to me before. It says, "At least, we know that we are no longer intentionally making life miserable for people." The girl I was dating was married and had kids. I was going to be the daddy, she was going to be the

mama, and everything was going to be okay. Well, in my Fourth Step, a pattern of mine was to date married women with children.

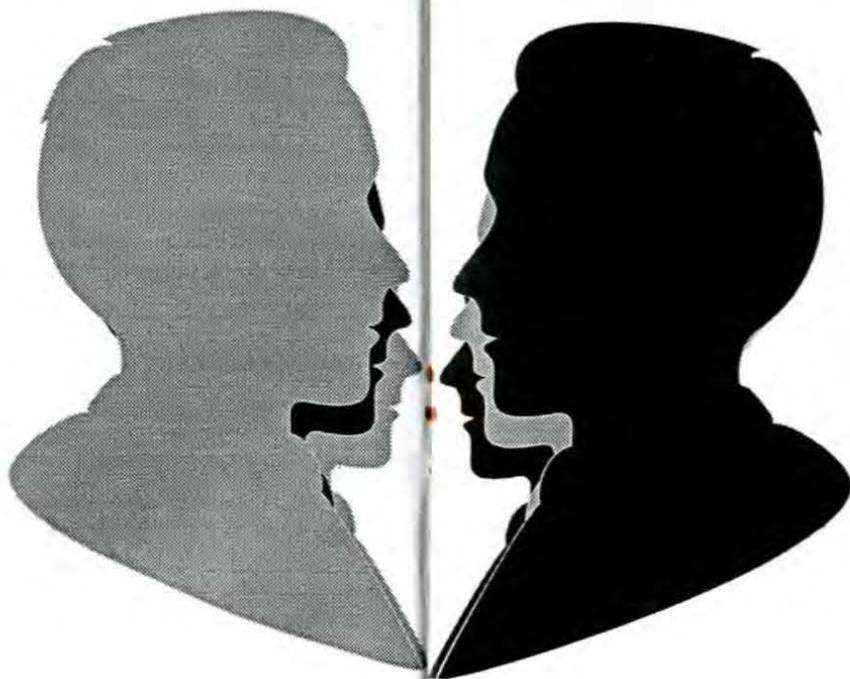
I began to pray again. I started going to more meetings, and I humbly asked my ex-sponsor if he would sponsor me again. I was willing to do whatever it takes to stay clean. I left my girlfriend. When my sponsor agreed to accept, I asked him if I needed to start over with the steps. He explained that I had built a good foundation in recovery: built some walls, had some windows installed, and added a roof, but that there were a few leaks in the roof that needed patching.

Today, at two years and eight months clean, I still have the same sponsor. I asked the people closest to me, "Why did you leave me alone?" They said they had to love me from a distance because they saw me going downhill. I believe today that anything you put before your recovery will be removed. I finally realized my sponsor could guess what the results of my behavior would be beforehand.

I had to get honest, go to meetings, work the steps, call my sponsor, read the Basic Text, and pray.

Today I am in a relationship with a woman who is not married and has no kids. I go to meetings regularly. I sponsor a number of guys and do service work. I tell the guys what has been told to me: I am here to guide you through the steps. The priorities in my recovery are, in this order, God, self, service, society. These point to freedom.

MC, Virginia



Home Group

It's time for me to make amends to my ex-husband...



That man...after one year of marriage he drove off with that Newcomer... I lost the house, my car, I lost my self respect...I was so hurt...



Now I know we all play a part in every relationship...I had some responsibility in that situation... I must forgive him as I would forgive myself...



From the editor

Who are you?

After our plea for stories appeared last month, we did begin receiving articles. Unfortunately, we can't use many of them. Why? Because we don't know who they came from.

Many of our contributors wish to remain anonymous when their stories are printed in the magazine. This is fine. All you have to do is request it. However, when you submit your article, you need to include your name and mailing address. If you don't send a copyright release in with your story, we'll need to mail you one before we can place your story into the review process.

Once we've received your article, it is mailed to the NA Way review panel. This panel makes recommendations to either approve or reject each article. On occasion, the panel also recommends ways to edit articles. If major changes are recommended, an editor will contact the writer before proceeding.

A little help

We suspect many of you haven't written for the magazine simply because you're not sure how to put a story together. Here's some help:

Make an outline. First, decide on the main thing you want to say. For instance, "My recovery is progressive." This is your main idea. Once you've decided on that, list supporting ideas underneath, such as: "I be-

come more responsible each year," "I'm always finding new ways to contribute to NA," and "I gain more freedom to be who I am with each day clean."

Once you've completed your outline, you are ready to start writing. Get comfortable, and make sure you have all the supplies you need close at hand. In most cases you should state your main idea in the first paragraph, then follow with your supporting ideas. Concentrate on one idea at a time. Don't worry about spelling and punctuation at this point. You can fix those later.

In fact, don't edit yourself at all as you are writing your first draft. You don't have to show your work to anyone before it's done, so be as creative as you wish.

Once you've written a draft, go through and correct spelling and punctuation. Pretend that you are reading a story written by someone else. Look for gaps in logic or undisclosed details that leave holes in your story. Fill in the holes. This is also the time to make deletions. Just make sure that you aren't deleting necessary material.

Once you've finished your story, put it into an envelope immediately and send it to:

The NA Way Magazine
PO Box 9999
Van Nuys, CA 91409 USA

We'd love to hear from you!

NA history

We are pleased to introduce a new column in The NA Way Magazine. The "NA History" column will appear regularly each month and contain articles from members of the fellowship recalling NA's beginnings in their part of the world and, on occasion, archival material from WSO files. Anything presented as fact must be verifiable. Perceptions and opinions must be presented as such. We welcome articles and archives from any and all sources. Please address your submissions to: The NA Way Magazine, PO Box 9999, Van Nuys, CA 91409 USA

NA historical tour

Many are aware that Narcotics Anonymous as we know it began in Southern California. Many are also aware that our present NA World Service Office is located near the places where NA began. Few members of today have ever visited the places that figure so prominently in NA's history. This NA historical tour will cover a couple of locations which are easy to find from our current WSO.

Jimmy Kinnon's house is the easiest of our historical locations to find, so we'll begin with this landmark. Jimmy was one of the founders of NA. Before we had a WSO, Jimmy's house was "communications central" for our fledgling fellowship. Later, during the 1970s, his address was one of several used for WSO. Many an early member called Jimmy's number for help, and it's not unusual to find an early member in Southern California who remembers visiting Jimmy's house for coffee and conversation.

To reach Jimmy K's home from the present WSO, go over two blocks to Sherman Way, make a left, and drive all the way to the end. Jimmy's address was 10717 Sherman Way. From today's WSO it's about seven miles. You'll know you're there when the Burbank Airport runway appears on the right. Jimmy's house is about a block and a half from the end of Sherman Way, across from the airport.

Today the house is blue with white trim and is surrounded by coils of concertina wire; the house is occupied by a concrete cutting company, and it appears they don't want visitors. When Jimmy lived there the house was a Navaho tan color and there was no chain link fence or wire. The space used for NA business is the right front room of the house. You'll notice this room has its own external door on the driveway side. This door was the entrance to the "office." The house has been added to since Jimmy and his family lived there. The left front of the house has a room with a new front door. When Jimmy lived there this was a walkway and the front door was in the wall where the original roof peaks.

From Jimmy's house it's not far to the place where the first documented NA meeting was held on October 5, 1953. Jimmy used to tell people the birthday of NA was July 10, 1953, and it's likely that recovery meetings were held during the summer of 1953. There are also minutes of a group steering committee, chaired by Jimmy, which began meeting on August 17, 1953 for the purpose of establishing a fellowship which, on September 14th, they named Narcotics Anonymous.

These same minutes record a first recovery meeting of NA on October 5, 1953. There were thirteen people present, and they all signed an attendance roster. The location of this first documented NA meeting in Southern California was a Salvation Army mission at the corner of Clybourn and Cantara. In 1953 this place was known as the "Dad's Club." The building is a Spanish-language church and the property is circled with a short chain link fence. Please respect their property.

The end of Clybourn Street intersects Sherman Way at its end. From Sherman Way, turn onto Clybourn Street and drive about one mile to an angled intersection in front of some railroad tracks. You'll want to be in the center lane at the intersection. With the green light, bear left onto the boulevard paralleling the tracks. This is San Fernando Road. At the next light, make a right onto Sunland Boulevard and go over the tracks. Immediately after the tracks, make a right and then a quick left to the continuation of Clybourn. The location of the first documented NA meeting is on the left side at the end of the block.

To find your way back to the WSO, just retrace your journey. Come back along Clybourn to San Fernando Road. Make a right and then immediately get into the left-turn lane. At the light turn left, go across the railroad tracks, and then turn left onto San Fernando Road. Yes, both sides of the railroad tracks have a boulevard with the same name. Continue on this street parallel to the railroad tracks to the next signal light. At the light turn right onto Clybourn. At the end of Clybourn is Sherman Way.

Rounding the corner and passing Jimmy's house again, one tends to wonder what it was like to be in recovery in NA during those early years. There are still strong feelings over how some of our history should be remembered. Part of our gratitude to those who came before us may well be the patience to let our story unfold with each perspective intact. "The full fruit of a labor of love lives in the harvest and that always comes in its right season."

Anonymous

Newsletters

Why go to meetings?

From *Free Spirit*, the Calgary, Alberta Area newsletter

This may seem like a silly question, especially to regular meeting-goers. After all, the Basic Text says that "those who keep coming to our meetings regularly stay clean." But it doesn't say that those who don't come to our meetings don't stay clean—though maybe it implies this.

Actually, I don't think the question is silly at all. It's a question I, at least, ask myself many times when I am faced with the question of whether to go to a meeting or to do something else. And the "something else" may be something important, something which will have to be done in the near future anyway. It may be something which will earn me money, and it's easy to rationalize that my job must take precedence—a questionable proposition, since without recovery I would probably have no job. But in the midst of a busy life, it's tempting to cut corners.

I'm reasonably sure I'm not alone in this. Many times I've been at meetings and have heard people say that they haven't been going to as many meetings as they should have. Some have attributed relapses to just that, and I have first-hand experience with this. In my relapsing days, which I hope and trust are over, my relapses usually followed a period of going to few or almost no meetings.

My next question is, how does going to meetings help? I don't find this an easy question to answer, but I've been thinking about it. If I miss one meeting that I would ordinarily go to, there is usually no obvious adverse result. So why not miss it? And if missing one has no affect, why not skip another? The ultimate result of this sort of thinking is no meetings at all, or maybe just showing up to collect the occasional key tag.

All the evidence seems to suggest that we do need to continue going to meetings, however well we think our recovery is going. I envy those who can just accept this without having to ask "Why?" but I have difficulty doing this. I have a need to know why. It's easier for me to accept that I must go to meetings if I have a rationale for it. So here are my reasons:

1. It's an acknowledgement, both to myself and to the world at large, that I am an addict.
2. A lot of what is said at the meetings, especially by those with a lot of time, reminds me of the program and how it should be worked. There are people

in the program who are a real inspiration to me.

3. It's a way of working the Twelfth Step. Simply by being there, and even more by sharing, I am carrying the message to the addict who still suffers, especially newcomers.

4. The fellowship itself is healing. I can see others recovering or constructively confronting life's problems and overcoming them.

5. And there is the awful, and sobering, experience of hearing about other's relapses. These warn me of a danger that is present.

I guess I should "keep coming back!"

Anonymous

Long-distance sponsorship

From *Never Alone*, the Michigan Region outreach newsletter

I'm a grateful recovering addict. Gratitude is what I remind myself of each time I share at an NA meeting. Gratitude for all the recovering people I have in my life today, but, most importantly, gratitude for people like my sponsor. He has been an incredible source of strength and support for me as I slowly worked my way through treatment, and today, as I learn to live life on life's terms in recovery. His willingness to field my phone calls—which, by the way, are always collect—and to take the time to listen is a big reassurance. By making me aware of the fact that I'm right where I'm supposed to be and that

whatever I'm going through will be all right, he has helped me through many uncertain times.

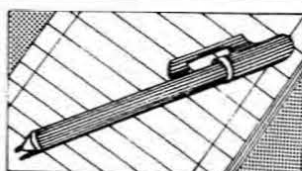
The fact that he lives in Livonia, Michigan and I live in Saginaw does not in any way detract from the quality of the recovery he shares with me. What does matter is whether or not I make the effort to draw on that support. There are those who say that a sponsor should be in close proximity to the recovering addict in order to be able to observe patterns. This may be true, but what is also true is the fact that a sponsor is not a therapist and can only give suggestions. The true value of sponsorship hinges on the degree of honesty of a sponsee with his or her sponsor. The true quality of sponsorship, I believe, depends on how honest, open-minded, and willing the sponsee and the sponsor are in their relationship.

Recovery for me means asking for help and a willingness to grow along the guidelines of the Twelve Steps of NA. It means taking suggestions from someone who has a good working knowledge of the program and seems relatively happy in his or her recovery. My long-distance sponsor fills these requirements and, at this point in my life, I wouldn't change a thing. In this program, as in life, there are no absolutes. We hang on to whatever works to help us stay clean and serene and productively rebuild our lives.

Early in my recovery, it was suggested that I stick with the winners. I believe my sponsor is a winner, regardless of his geographic location. My recovery is my responsibility and so is keeping in touch with my sponsor, wherever he or I may be.

JB, Michigan

Viewpoint



Losing our lifeline

Wow! What a home town convention I just attended!

While sitting in the banquet hall listening to the speaker, my sense of hearing was overwhelmed by loud exclamations. So much for taking side conversations outside in respect for the speaker and others.

Then the line you must wait in to purchase convention stuff! Still, everybody usually waits their turn except for some knuckleheads who decided that might makes right and jumped to the head of the line, all the while looking at people and daring them to say something. How very spiritual.

I really enjoyed the meeting on

spirituality, especially the part when most of the audience started chanting about there being only "one true God." This display of tolerance was underwhelming and possibly a signpost of where NA is headed.

My hat is off to the recovering addicts from out of town who purposely set off the hotel fire alarm three times just for laughs. The local fire department was very amused and the hotel thought it was hilarious. Maybe we can share that magical moment again when your city has a convention. It's doubtful that our city will have another one.

When I crawled back to this fellowship, I saw how it had grown and changed. However, we must look hard at ourselves and wonder where it all is going. If my local convention is any indication, we are headed off a cliff.

The intolerance, rudeness, antagonism, and physical threats I witnessed are not evidence of recovery of any sort. We are in danger of losing our lifeline. Should we throw the bums out? Should we keep quiet and lose everything? This is life and death, people.

All of us must ensure that this kind of behavior stops. If you who are reading this think I'm being harsh, you're right. I remember when there was no NA in this part of the world. I remember being asked to leave other twelve-

step meetings because of intolerance and ignorance. I am a grateful recovering addict. Please help me keep recovering in Narcotics Anonymous.

With true love and respect,

JK, Pennsylvania

More on specialized groups

This is in response to the article "On Specialized Groups" in the October 1992 issue of *The NA Way*. It stirred a response in me that I feel I have to share.

I realize there is controversy about specialized groups. I have worked with hospitals and institutions for a while and concentrated most of my efforts at a local women's prison. Upon release, most inmates of that prison go into work-release programs. I have been able to take some of these addicts to outside meetings.

One of the meetings I took some of these women to was a women's meeting. Needless to say, the miracle happened. They stated that they were

glad the meeting was for women only. Most feared being in mixed groups. They felt "less than" because of where they had come from (prison). They felt comfortable being around females only at their first few meetings. They were able to discuss pain that they could not share in mixed company. This women's meeting was a spiritual gift to those women who needed comfort and reassurance their first few days out of prison.

During this time, this women's meeting was suffering from low attendance. Members of the outreach subcommittee in my area, which I belong to, often support this meeting. As most subcommittees operate with limited volunteers, it was sometimes necessary for the chairperson to pitch in and support the meeting. The chairperson is male. As a matter of fact, most of the subcommittee members are male. Subcommittee members, male and female, were welcome at this meeting because we care about suffering addicts and suffering meetings equally.

In the October 1992 issue, TL of Wisconsin stated, "But my basic premise is that specialized meetings contradict the NA message of freedom from addiction for all addicts." But I feel that NA is there for anyone who has the desire to stop using, whether it is through women's meetings, gay meetings, youth meetings, senior citizen's meetings, etc. I will support any NA meeting if I am able to. NA tells me that I am welcome anywhere. If I was suffering and went to a specialized meeting, do you think those recovering addicts would turn me away? I think not.

The way I look at specialized meetings is this: If there are people showing up for these meetings, then there are addicts choosing to live that day. What a wonderful miracle!

The God of my understanding gave me my life back. NA shows me how to live again. If I choose to single out any person or group, then I am choosing to separate myself from the heart of NA. I have to stay near the heart because that's where the love is.

To all of you specialized groups: Many blessings to you for making addicts feel comfortable to share their pain and seek recovery.

DM, Louisiana

Anyone may join us

I have been troubled by what I am seeing in the rooms of recovery in my area. It is the issue of "black" meetings and "white" meetings. I noticed it before, but this past week something hit me. I called a friend (she is of another race) and asked her if she would like to go to a different meeting. It is the only meeting in the immediate area on Monday night. She

replied "Oh no, I can't stand that meeting." What! I didn't believe my ears! A meeting is a meeting. Personal recovery depends on NA unity.

When I looked around the meeting, everyone in attendance was of one race, which was not the same as my friend's. I began to ask around to find out where all of her friends go on Monday night. "They all go to the other side of the county," I was told. The other side of the county is an area of another race! What is this all about? Personal recovery depends on NA unity.

I am deliberately not naming my race. Why should I? I am an addict. In my home group, I am a minority. Who cares? If I had paid attention to color and race in that group when I came into NA, I might not be alive today.

Recovery is not a black thing or a white thing. It's about the therapeutic value of one addict helping another. Our primary purpose is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. And most importantly, anyone may join us regardless of age, race, sexual identity, creed, religion, or lack of religion.

KP, New York

Unconditional

In the Basic Text's introduction on page xv, it states, "Our identification as addicts is all-inclusive with respect to any mood-changing, mind-altering substance. . . . our problem is not a specific substance, it is a disease called addiction."

What this means to me is that, no matter what manifestation of addiction I'm suffering from and want help in dealing with, the Twelve Steps of NA can guide me and the fellowship can give me the support and unconditional love I need.

Tradition Three states that "the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using." It doesn't state that the requirement is a desire to stop using a specific drug. It states to stop using, period!

Recently, I was with a group of recovering addicts and we came across a recovery newsletter article dealing with recovery and smoking cigarettes. The author described how the program and fellowship guided her in her recovery from drugs, and how she applied the Twelve Steps and NA principles to her cigarette addiction. Some of us felt that the title of

the article was inappropriate for a recovery newsletter and had nothing to do with NA.

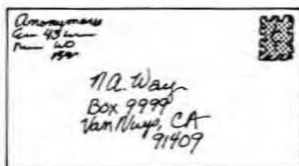
"By staying clean, we begin to practice spiritual principles such as . . . unconditional love . . ." (Basic Text, p. 50). To me, unconditional love means just that: unconditional! When an addict wants to use the principles of the NA program to recover from his or her addiction, other addicts should be willing to give unconditional support. We know that the value of one addict helping another is without parallel and that it works. Without it, many addicts might suffer and never hear the message of recovery.

In short, when an addict shares what he or she is going through, whether in person or in a newsletter, the addict on the other end of it should be able to identify with the person's feelings. I was told early in recovery to identify with the person's feelings, not with the story. Being understanding, considerate, and relating to the addict speaking is what makes the NA way work. We can't do it alone.

Let's show our unconditional support whenever it's needed. The newcomer may be the most important person in any meeting, but we're all valuable to the Fellowship of NA.

RC, New York

From our readers



My gratitude speaks

I must say that the November 1992 issue of *The NA Way* has touched me deeply. I experienced all kinds of emotions throughout the feature article, "Amends," which brought tears to my eyes and pain to my heart. The article about the NA purist made me feel so glad to be a part of a healthy, beautiful fellowship. The article, "Fired," brought total confusion. I missed the point, but that's okay. I know someone in NA will help me figure it out.

While reading the article titled "Patterns," I felt joy for the wonderful talent with words this person shared. I found the article on the twelve steps to a meeting very giving, interesting, neat, and I was very appreciative that groups are going to be sharing what works for them. The article called "And Another's" I found very honest and I could identify with the feelings shared. I found the article on courage to be not only about courage but perseverance as well; I felt strength and hope.

I could go on and on I guess. I am so grateful to all the addicts who write and share their experience, strength, and hope with me. Sometimes I can't reach anyone on the phone and feel like I want to reach out to an addict, or I wish I was at a meeting. At times like these, I can pick up *The NA Way Magazine*.

I am so grateful. Well, I didn't in-

tend to write about how I felt reading the magazine. But I guess my gratitude speaks when I care and share *The NA Way*.

LB, Georgia

Learning to live

I did not walk into this program with a smile on my face and love in my heart. However, I did notice that if I worked the steps I could have those feelings. The only feeling I had when I got here was rage. I came to NA via the court system. I figured that two years of fooling the court system was better than the alternative. When I went to my first NA meeting, I walked in stomping my boots on the floor and wearing all black. I sat in the back of the room and judged everyone, but somewhere deep inside I knew I was home.

By the time I had three years clean, I had reached the Tenth Step. I realized I was apologizing all the time for my behavior. After talking with my sponsor, we agreed to go back and find what I had missed. Going back was a big lesson in humility. I truly had decided that I liked all of my defects of character. I noticed that I felt protected by them. By admitting that I liked my defects I prepared to let them go.

I had this fantasy that I lived in a castle. In order to be invited into my

castle you had to act a certain way. If for any reason I found I couldn't trust you, you were cast out of my kingdom forever. Through working Step Six I found that what I lived in was not a castle but a jail cell. My defects of character kept shutting the door as I tried to walk out of my cell. I wanted to be free. Step Seven held the key to unlock the door.

After working these steps I met a man. Before I met him I looked for superficial features in men. After another disastrous relationship I discovered my problem was that I chose the wrong men. I prayed and decided the next guy I was going to go out with was going to choose me. When we met he asked me out. In this relationship, as well as others, I learned many lessons. I learned forgiveness, trust, love, acceptance, patience, and dealing with issues as they happen instead of holding on until I explode. What a concept! I tried everything I knew to make him uninterested in a second or third date. For that matter, I tried for six months to get rid of him. We fought constantly.

After what could have been our last fight, my sponsor told me to go back and work it out. She suggested we make a ninety-day commitment to stay together no matter what. We made this commitment and it changed our relationship. We could set boundaries of behavior that were unacceptable to the other person. We learned to trust that no matter what we did the other person would be there. We worked through all those abandonment issues. After the ninety days were up, our relationship had changed drastically.

I had already worked Steps Eight and Nine, but now I had a new perspective on the word "humble." This time I included myself. I wrote down every negative sentence I had ever said to myself about myself. For every negative sentence, a positive sentence was written beneath it. This new sentence would become an affirmation I would repeat to myself. I also made a list of things I had done to myself. As I started each sentence I said "I forgive myself for..." I realized no one, including myself, was perfect.

I had heard people talk about life happening to them in excess between five and six years. I was no exception. This last year has been filled with many changes. I was in a car accident. I was fired from my job two weeks later. As a result, I decided to go to college. This has become a big adventure. I have no idea what I want to do. I continue to pray and listen for the answer. Lately, I think I want to be a lawyer. I never thought I would have ended up on the other side of the courtroom.

One week later the doctor found a lump in my breast. I had the lump removed and everything was fine. But three weeks after the surgery, I was in the hospital with pneumonia. The lessons I have learned have been many. One of them is that life is very short and I should make the most of it. It was at this time that I started to accept being a woman and accept my femininity. The growth into a woman prior to these experiences was so gradual I didn't even know it. But I made a conscious decision that I was actually willing to be a woman. Up until this point I thought women were

weak or matronly. Through observing my friends I have realized that this was not the definition of a woman.

All my life I have stood up for what I believe in. Through NA I have learned how to do that more productively. After a series of events in NA service in my area, it was decided that some of us should bring up our concerns at the area service committee meeting. We did. The reaction of those around us was painful. It seemed as though there was a trial, a jury, and witnesses. We weren't invited to the trial. The verdict, "guilty of being a disunifying member," was read. The events that happened next would rock my recovery. I thought, "Who needs these people. I am not going to be involved in service anymore."

I mentioned to one member that I really needed a meeting. This person told me not to attend the meeting I mentioned because members of the subcommittee that I and others were having the controversy with would be there and I was probably not going to be welcomed.

After ending my conversation with this person, I was devastated. On one hand, I felt that I should be able to go to any meeting I want. On the other hand, I felt that recovery was what I sought that night and being made to feel unwelcome at a meeting probably would not be the recovery I was seeking. I need people in my life today who understand the difference between a principle and my overall personality.

People called me on the phone and asked me to change my opinion for the sake of unity. What these people don't understand is that unity is a result of disagreeing or agreeing

about a topic and then coming up with a solution for all. Unity is not about looking around a room, noting how your friends are voting, and then voting with the majority. A group conscience happens when everyone gets the chance to talk and be listened to, when we pray for an answer, and then vote.

I believe there are no right or wrong ways to do something. I know we make choices and those choices have implications. I am responsible for my actions, not the reactions of others. What is one person's opinion of me is only that person's opinion. I have had to do a lot of praying lately for the willingness to let go of my hurt feelings and the resentments that I held toward individuals.

Sponsorship and life are not always popularity contests. I am a human being and a member of NA. I belong wherever I choose to go. I have principles that I believe in. While it's not my place to make others conform, it is my place to be true to myself. Thank God for NA. Without it I would be a lost, empty soul!

LM, Washington

Goodbye, Dad

My father died in 1984. I was deep in my addiction and busy being the star performer at my job, maintaining the farm, the cars, the wife and kids, and at least one other woman. My mom called from Florida and told me my father had had a heart attack, his fourth. I remember asking her if I could wait to go there because I had a big project going on at work and it would really be better for me if I could wait until the weekend. Since my

mom and I were still incredibly dysfunctional, she agreed and said she didn't want me to worry.

Several days later, after my father had been moved out of intensive care, my Higher Power gave me a most precious gift. Totally out of the blue, I decided to call my father. We already had it set up for me to call him later that evening, but, literally out of nowhere, I said, "I'm going to call my father now." While we talked about fishing and food, his two favorite topics, I said, "I love you, you know." He responded, "I love you, too, son." I then heard the phone on his end hit something. My father did not respond to my shouts. I hung up and called the operator at the hospital and asked for the nursing station. When I finally got through, I was asked to call back because the nurses were busy with an emergency. You see, my father had died of a massive heart attack while I was talking to him on the phone. The last words he ever spoke were "I love you, too, son."

I got loaded and got on a plane that night. While I was there, I stayed up on one drug or another, made all the arrangements, and flew with my father's body back to his home town. I attended the funeral, cried when I was supposed to, and thought mostly of how to score in this strange town. When they put his body in the ground, that was it: it was over and done. I thought, "My father's gone, so let's get on with it. He was never around before, so why should I be upset?"

Last Memorial Day, I got a call from my cousin informing me that there was to be a family reunion. By the

grace of my Higher Power and the power of NA, I had been clean for over a year at the time. "No thanks!" was my immediate response. But, needing to do some Ninth Step work with family members and learning to trust in my spiritual program, I agreed to go. When we arrived at the old home place, I was overjoyed to find that least seven members of my extended family were in recovery, five in NA and two in another fellowship. After many, many hours of honest sharing about how it was growing up in our family, I felt so much love that I cannot describe it. Yes, I feel love from my NA family. No, I never felt much love from my blood family. But now, they are one and the same!

My father died in August 1984. On Memorial Day, 1992, I was able to do what I never could in eight years: visit his grave and say goodbye. The five cousins who knew him best, three of whom are in NA, all went to the gravesite together. We stayed about two hours, talking about him, to him, cussing and praising him, recalling times we had together, venting anger, and voicing our love. I was able to say things to him I had only been able to say in my mind before. Having my NA family with me in reality, as well as in spirit, made it possible. Only through the program of NA and a conscious contact with my Higher Power could I give up my resentments over what never had been and what never would be. I could start to heal the wound that had remained open so long. I could say, from my heart, "I'm clean today. I know you loved me. I love you. Goodbye, Dad."

GH, Tennessee

Comin' up



ALBERTA: Jul. 30-Aug. 2, 1993; 4th Annual Central Alberta Area Campout; info (403) 342-1444; CAANA, PO Box 472, Red Deer, Alberta T5N 4G1

ARKANSAS: Jun. 18-20, 1993; 9th Annual Beaver Round-up; info (501) 443-3599; Round-up Committee, PO Box 23, Lowell, AR 72743

2) Jul. 2-4, 1993; 5th Annual Central Arkansas Area Convention; helpline (501) 982-1928; CAACNA, PO Box 24223, Little Rock, AR 72221

BRITISH COLUMBIA: Jul. 2-4, 1993; 3rd Canadian Convention of NA; rsvn.s (604) 685-7210; info (604) 431-6453; CCNA, PO Box 102, 1470 Commercial Drive, Vancouver, BC V5L 3X9

2) Sep. 24-26, 1993; 14th British Columbia Regional Convention; info (604) 754-3673 (eve) or (604) 758-8048 (day); BCRCA-14, Box 118, 67 Victoria Cres., Nanaimo, BC V9R 5B9

COLORADO: Jul. 2-4, 1993; 9th West States Unity Convention; rsvn.s (800) 228-9290; info (303) 755-5253; Convention, PO Box 6176, Denver, CO 80206

CONNECTICUT: Jun. 4-6, 1993; 7th Annual Greater Waterbury Area Family Campout; info (203) 263-5801 or (203) 723-7312; GWANA Family Campout, PO Box 1075, Woodbury, CT 06798

2) Jul. 23-25, 1993; 3rd Annual Campout; info (203) 744-5499 or (203) 350-8161; GDANA Campout, PO Box 2253, Danbury, CT 06813

FLORIDA: Jun. 4-6, 1993; Spiritual Retreat; Marathon, Florida; info (305) 743-9246

2) Jul. 1-5, 1993; 12th Annual Florida Regional Convention; rsvn.s (800) 422-5333; info (407) 897-2003 (RSO); FRSO, 709 Brookhaven Drive, Suite 3, Orlando, FL 32803

3) Oct. 8-10, 1993; 1st South Florida Regional Convention; info (305) 652-7711; SFRCA, PO Box 69-4487, North Miami, FL 33169

ILLINOIS: Jun. 25-27, 1993; 9th Annual Flight to Freedom; info (618) 283-0086 or (618) 326-8890; Flight to Freedom, 22630 Kentucky Road, Ashley, IL 62808

2) Jul. 4, 1993; 3rd Annual Picnic; South Sandusky Recreation Area Picnic Shelter #2, Rend Lake in Southern Illinois

3) Sep. 2-5, 1993; 23rd World Convention for Narcotics Anonymous Chicago; info (818) 780-3951; WCC, PO Box 9999, Van Nuys, CA 91409

INDIANA: Jun. 18-20, 1993; 10th Annual Campout Retreat; Central Indiana ASC, PO Box 661, Indianapolis, IN 46206

2) Sep. 18, 1993; 7th Annual Gratitude & Unity Dance; Concord Center, 1310 South Meridian, IN; Central Indiana ASC, PO Box 661, Indianapolis, IN 46206

KANSAS: Jul. 1-4, 1993; 15th Annual Free Campout; info (913) 357-7024; Mid-America Region, PO Box 8732, Wichita, KS 67203

LOUISIANA: Oct. 29-31, 1993; 1st New Orleans Area Convention; rsvn.s (800) 627-4500; info (504) 254-2791; New Orleans Convention, PO Box 52212, New Orleans, LA 70152-2212

MAINE: Jun. 11-13, 1993; The Nature of Recovery II; info (207) 375-4935; Central Maine ASC, PO Box 8068, Lewiston, ME 04240-8068

2) Aug. 14, 1993; Central & Southern Maine H&I and Phoneline Learning Day; info (603) 880-3689; Northern New England Region, PO Box 1752, Portland, ME 04104

MANITOBA: Jun. 11-13, 1993; 3rd Winnipeg Area Convention; info (204) 338-5850; Area Service Committee, PO Box 25173, 1650 Main Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2V 4C8

MASSACHUSETTS: Jul. 23-25, 1993; 1st Western Massachusetts Area Convention; info (413) 747-1679; WMASCA, PO Box 5914, Springfield, MA 01101-5914

MICHIGAN: Jul. 1-4, 1993; 9th Michigan Regional Convention; info (800) 233-1234; MSO (313) 544-2010; MRCNA-IX, PO Box 1480, Berkley, MI 48072-1480

MISSOURI: Jun. 18-20, 1993; 8th Show-Me Regional Convention; info (314) 739-2346; Show-Me Convention, PO Box 689, Bridgeton, MO 63044

MONTANA: Jun. 25-27, 1993; 5th Annual Montana Gathering; info (406) 245-8229; Gathering, PO Box 80761, Billings, MT 59108-0761

NEBRASKA: Sep. 17-19, 1993; 10th Annual Nebraska Regional Convention; rsvn.s (308) 345-3700; info (308) 345-5839; NRCNA-X, PO Box 633, McCook, NE 69001

NEVADA: Jun. 18-20, 1993; 4th Sierra Sage Regional Convention; rsvn.s (800) 648-3361; info (702) 324-2302; SSRC IV, PO Box 11913, Reno, NV 89510

NEW BRUNSWICK: Jun. 18-20, 1993; 3rd Annual New Brunswick Area Convention; info (506) 451-8492; New Brunswick Area, PO Box 20064, Fredericton, New Brunswick E3B 6Y8

NEW HAMPSHIRE: Jun. 25-27, 1993; 3rd Granite State Area Campout; info (603) 622-4761 or (603) 644-2651; Campout, PO Box 4354, Manchester, NH 03108

2) Jul. 16-18, 1993; 3rd Freedom Under the Stars Campout; info (603) 432-0168; Seacoast Area NA, PO Box 652, Dover, NH 03820

NEW JERSEY: Aug. 20-22, 1993; 3rd Annual Convention; rsvn.s (201) 265-3846; NNJRCC, PO Box 5064, South Hackensack, NJ 07606

NORTH CAROLINA: Jul. 9-11, 1993; 4th Annual Recovery in the Rough; info (919) 983-9389 or (919) 983-2878; Newcomers Group, PO Box 321, King, NC 27021

2) Sep. 10-12, 1993; 2nd Annual Central Piedmont Area Convention; rsvn.s (704) 638-0311; info (704) 278-9536; CPANAC, PO Box 282, Landis, NC 28088

PENNSYLVANIA: Jun. 11-13, 1993; 2nd Reading Area Campout; info (215) 373-0241 or (215) 378-7954; Reading Campout, PO Box 6483, Wyomissing, PA 19610

2) Sep. 10-12, 1993; First Williamsport Area NA Convention; rsvn.s (717) 326-9701; info (717) 321-0356

SOUTH CAROLINA: Jun. 25-27, 1993; 13th Annual Carolina Regional Convention; info (803) 583-9333; CRCC '93, PO Box 2362, Spartanburg, SC 29304-2362

SWEDEN: Jul. 23-25, 1993; 10th European Conference and Convention of NA; info 46-8-7652700; helpline 46-8-6002707

TENNESSEE: Jun. 17-20, 1993; 3rd Annual Riverside Recovery; info (615) 929-8086; Volunteer Region, PO Box 5702, Johnson City, TN 37603-5702

UNITED KINGDOM: Aug. 13-15, 1993; 7th Annual United Kingdom Convention; info (071) 272-9040; UKCNA 7, PO Box 1980, London, England, N19 3LS

WASHINGTON: Sep. 24-26, 1993; North Puget Sound Area 10th Anniversary; info (206) 428-4385; Information, PO Box 1001, Mount Vernon, WA 98273

WISCONSIN: Jun. 4-6, 1993; SWANA Multi-Regional PI Learning Day; info (608) 987-2611 or (608) 935-2052; SWANA, 158-1/2 High Street, Mineral Point, WI 53565

2) Jul. 15-18, 1993; 4th Annual Freedom by Choice Campout and Cruise; info (414) 476-4984; Campout, 1534 S 65th Street #2, Milwaukee, WI 53214

3) Aug. 6-8, 1993; 9th Mid-Coast Convention; rsvn.s (800) 552-5121; info (414) 435-8957 or (414) 866-2379; MCC-9, PO Box 9186, Green Bay, WI

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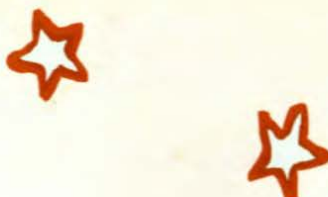
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The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous

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

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My gratitude speaks
when I care
and when I share with others
the NA way



What is Narcotics Anonymous?

NA is a non-profit 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 stay clean. This is a program of complete abstinence from all drugs. There is only one requirement for membership, the desire to stop using. We suggest that you keep an open mind and give yourself a break. 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.

