



N.A.W.O.L. NEWS VOL. 4 ED. 1

March -April 2010

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(Please pass this Newsletter on to your friends in recovery and have them contact me if they would like to be on our mailing list.)

1. N.A.W.O.L. NEWS:

Here is the link (for viewing) the nawolnews group

<http://groups.google.com/group/nawolnews?hl=en>

Doing this also allows me to keep all input and membership lists centrally located in a single place. It also allows me to email all newsletters at once instead of doing so in groups of 30. I am currently sending Newsletters to 130 people in over 10 countries. As to proof reading of the NA Way of Life we still need someone to proof –read Ch’s. 6-13: Ch’s 15 & 17 along with Ch’s 19-24 and the entire section on the 12 steps. We currently have 8 people and 2 groups actively working on input and/or proof reading.

NA Society Journal

Social Characteristics - NA as a society requires identification within our membership and certain customs embraced and embodied in our 12 Traditions - the same spirit of generosity that prompted AA to give us the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions includes their 12 Concepts as well as the Long Form of the Traditions. NA is not a business. NA is not a cult. We grow by developing our strengths while protecting ourselves from our weaknesses by having the good sense to surrender and get help! Like all societies, we have positive and negative sanctions. Positive sanctions are like group recognition, applause and expressions of gratitude. Negative sanctions are like ignoring certain behaviors, taking time to talk in private, and learning days to keep personality disorders from coming out while chairing a meeting, service and politics: the taking of sides. Our Society must

always be the life of the Spirit. As we trade in our fears and grow in our faith, we have to carefully arrange our message of hope so that each person gets what he or she needs at each stage of their recovery. This, our message, is the miracle of NA.

NA also has rights to the Long Form of the AA 12 Traditions and we need to act on this as a Fellowship to deepen our understanding of the 12 Traditions.

Yours in Service,
Lester O.

Unlike the nawolnews group, the NA Society Journal will be a web site in lieu of a news group. Here is the link.

<http://groups.google.com/group/nawolnews?hl=en>

The N.A. Society Journal is a current N.A.W.O.L. Project. This is a site for Journaling your thoughts concerning the N.A. Society. This site will provide space for Journals on N.A.W.O.L. Projects, both past and present as well as the History of N.A. and hopefully expand to cover the entire NA. Society.

Anyone can view this site,

<http://sites.google.com/site/nasocietyjournalproject/>

but only Owners and Collaborators can post. You can become an Owner or Collaborator only by invitation. This is to help reduce spam and/or prevent the site from becoming a chat room with unrelated post. To become an Owner or Collaborator. Please send me an Email at

Lester1444@hotmail.com . You must be a member of N.A. and state why you want to be an owner or collaborator.

Introduction/Summary:

Next month it will have been one year since the last of the NAWOL Newsletter. A lot has happened in that time. Some of the highlights of the last year to be discussed in this edition are: (1) Updates from our members, (2) the 2010 version of the NA Way of Life, and (3) the future direction of the NA Society

Updates from Some of Our Members (cont):

1. **One year ago, Tim H. of The No Limits Group of Narcotics Anonymous Ad Hoc Literature Group reported the following'**

Sent from my iPhone Feb. 7, 2009

We are working from scratch on an ip on spiritual principles like the NA way of life. We greatly appreciate your input and plan to bring our literature to the next New England regional lit conference

Last week I received notice that the work has been completed and that the group is currently in the process of submitting the work to World Services for consideration as an IP or Booklet at the upcoming WSC. This action was done per group conscience expressing the wishes of those who worked on it taking into consideration the conscious of a loving and caring Higher Power of their understanding. Enclosed below is a copy of the completed work. as submitted to World Services along with the groups initial letter to NAWS and the replies that NAWS sent to them. Most of this work can also be found interwoven into the 2010 NA Way of Life in the chapters on our Principles.

Initial Letter from “The No Limits Group of NA”:

From: Marc B Lapidus [<mailto:mb152162@aol.com>]

Sent: Monday, March 01, 2010 6:56 PM

To: Elaine Wickham; timhoulton@yahoo.com

Subject: Spiritual Principles

To: Narcotics Anonymous World Service Office

From: The No Limits Group of Narcotics Anonymous (Mid State Unity Area, Middletown Connecticut)

Contents: Spiritual Principle IP

Hope: It is our hope that World Services will see fit to use this grass roots piece of literature to help carry the message to the addict who still suffers. We spent the last year and a half writing about each of the spiritual principles mentioned in step twelve of our basic text. We also included an introduction so the material could be collated into a booklet. We are aware of the approval process and pray that members of the World Service Office will do the necessary work to enable the literature to be included in the next CAR Report.

Note From Our Group: Before each group conscience, we used the same prayer the Literature Subcommittee used when creating our Basic Text. As the spirit moved around the room, individual input got lost in the love of a group conscience. We pray this work helps the still sick and suffering addict.

In Loving Service,
The No Limits Group of Narcotics Anonymous

Mid State Unity Area
Middletown, Connecticut

Letter from Steve R. to the No Limits Group:

-----Original Message-----

From: Steve Rusch <stever@na.org>

To: mb152162@aol.com <mb152162@aol.com>

Sent: Tue, Mar 2, 2010 5:47 pm

Subject: FW: Spiritual Principles

Hello Marc - Thanks for writing to NA World Services, and for your service to NA. In response to your email, our best recommendation is to complete and forward the attached Project Idea Form along with a copy of the material. That will ensure that it will be reviewed by the World Board for their consideration.

With that said, it may be helpful to consider that literature development projects are approved by the World Service Conference, and then taken up by NA World Services. And every literature development project includes the opportunity for the entire fellowship to participate in the creation, not only the approval, of the piece. Understanding that process, we would caution against any expectation that this might appear in the next CAR for approval.

Members of your group who are interested in participating in literature development may be interested to know that currently there is a project working on a book-length piece with the working title of Living Clean – The Journey Continues. Perhaps some of what you worked on may be offered to that project. For more on Living Clean we encourage you to visit that portion of our website. Here is that link: http://www.na.org/?ID=Living_Clean_Project

And finally, to stay abreast of NAWS activities, you may want to consider an e-subscription to *NAWS News*. Here is a link to our e-sub portal: <http://portaltools.na.org/PortalTools/subscriptions/Login.cfm>

Thanks again for writing. Feel free to follow-up with any additional thoughts or questions.

Warm regards,

Steve Rusch
Fellowship Services Team Leader
NA World Services
818-773-9999 x173
steve@na.org

Letter from Elaine W. to the No Limits Group:

-----Original Message-----

From: Elaine Wickham <Elaine@na.org>
To: 'Marc B Lipids' <mb152162@aol.com>
Sent: Tue, Mar 2, 2010 11:21 am
Subject: RE: Spiritual Principles

We've received your email message and want you to know that it's important to us. The appropriate Board members will see the information or question you sent, if it pertains directly to the Board's business. Otherwise, a member of the WSO staff will send any further response to you very soon.

In order to avoid duplication, any follow-up to your message should be addressed to me at Elaine@na.org. Please also keep in mind that all other questions can be sent directly to info@na.org.

Thanks very much for writing to NA World Services. We send you our very best wishes in your ongoing recovery and service efforts.

In fellowship,
Elaine Wickham
NAWS

Material on the Principles for suggested IP: Spiritual Principles

Introduction:

-No Limits Group of Narcotics Anonymous Adhoc Literature Group

The fifth tradition of Narcotics Anonymous clearly states that the primary purpose of our fellowship is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. Our traditions are the ties that bind us together. Members who have found this new way of life can be heard sharing their experience, strength and hope based upon their understanding of the fifth tradition. They share with sincerity and humility that any addict can stop using, lose the

desire to use, and find a new way of life. Since the beginning, Narcotics Anonymous has been saving the lives of addicts who would otherwise continue to suffer from the disease of addiction. Our hope is that you too can experience the freedom found through practicing the spiritual principles contained in the 12th step of our basic text.

Principle Number One; Hope (Final Draft Version)

-No Limits Group of Narcotics Anonymous Adhoc Literature Group

Countless addicts have found hope in NA since the first meeting in 1953. Hope is a spiritual principle that can be given away to any addict. Our message is hope and our promise is freedom. Any addict can find the life-saving principle of hope when they walk into a meeting of Narcotics Anonymous.

Hope is the feeling in our spirit that tells us that maybe we too can get clean, lose the desire to use, and find a new way of life. Hope comes to us in a variety of ways. Although we can not recover on hope alone, it opens the door to our new way of life.

After coming to Narcotics Anonymous, seeing is believing! We watch members as their despair turns to hope. We also see other addict's smile, perhaps for the first time, when they pick up a thirty day key tag. Day by day, meeting by meeting, and step by step, we notice others members finding a new way of life. We hear addicts share about losing family members, receiving a bad break at work, or watching a best friend go back out and use yet they do not pick up! They have found a solution to life's everyday problems. Their empathy gives us hope. These newfound feelings of hope are often foreign to us but fuel our desire to recover. Some people leave their first meeting of Narcotics Anonymous realizing that they can get clean and find a new way to live. Hope is a powerful emotion – a sense that maybe we too could be happy and enjoy life for the first time in a long time. We begin to dream.

With hope, we have a new vision of the future. We want what those who came before us have found in recovery. Hope gives us the ability to believe in our dreams without having lived them. How do we make our dreams become reality? We surrender to the solution. With our new-found hope we become willing to take certain steps. We're now ready to get a sponsor, trust in others, take direction and learn to live the program of Narcotics Anonymous.

Principle Number Two; The Spiritual Principle of *Surrender* (Final Draft Version)

The No Limits Group of Narcotics Anonymous Ad Hoc Literature Group

We experience our first taste of surrender when we walk into a meeting of Narcotics Anonymous for the first time. No matter how sick, desperate, or afraid, we managed to get to the one place that can save our lives. When we say we're an 'addict', our life long

struggle with trying to find new ways and means to fit in and feel normal is over! Our will could run no more. We've finally admitted that we need help. Surrender is seeking help from something other than our self. Although our level of surrender deepens as we continue to work the steps, we must make this initial surrender if we are to find a new way of life.

The more we work the 12-steps with a Narcotics Anonymous sponsor, the more our surrender grows. We eventually learn to surrender daily. Some addicts read the Just For Today in the morning to tap into their own higher power. Some call other members and talk about where they are in their recovery process. Others pray to ask for help from their higher power and meditate to listen to the answers. No matter what we are doing for our recovery, each time we make an effort to get better we turn our will and life over to the care of something greater than ourselves.

Over time, we come to understand that surrender is an action principle that allows us to be happy at any given moment. No matter how we're feeling, we can use the tools of recovery to take us to a better place. Simply asking is not enough. We learn that if we want to feel good, we do the things that make us feel good. Getting involved in service is another way we can surrender our will and life and experience the freedom of giving away what was so freely given. We make the decision to surrender so we too can loose the desire to use and find a new way of life.

Our way of doing things failed miserably. We tried time and time again to use successfully yet the end result was always the same; jails, institutions, and death. It's time to tap into a guaranteed solution to get relief from a potentially deadly problem. We've heard it said time and time again in meetings yet it still holds just as much importance as the first time we heard it; "We must surrender to win!"

Principle Number Three; Acceptance (Final Draft Version)

The No Limits Group of Narcotics Anonymous Ad Hoc Literature Group

Acceptance usually refers to cases where a person experiences a situation or condition (often a negative or uncomfortable situation) without attempting to change it, protest or exit. Acceptance is a spiritual principal known throughout the world that helps individuals move from their will to God's will. Acceptance is being okay with the outcome even if we don't like it. Many of us experience acceptance as a peace in our hearts regardless of what's going on around us in our lives.

We have come to understand that there are different levels of acceptance in Narcotics Anonymous. We often start out by accepting the fact that we have a disease and that we need help. Acceptance implies surrender to the program. If we want to continue on our recovery journey, we work the 12 steps and develop a relationship with a Higher Power. We begin to not only accept our disease, but a spiritual solution.

Our first act of acceptance may come when we admit we're an addict for the first time. Shortly thereafter, we become aware that with faith and trust in a Higher Power, we can be restored to sanity. As we stay clean and experience challenges, we surrender to life on life's terms. Not only do we learn to accept ourselves, we learn to accept others and our Higher Power's will.

We may learn to accept people, places and things as they are, and merely change our reactions to them. A common struggle for recovering addicts is that we cannot keep another addict clean. We learn to accept our powerlessness over another addict's recovery, or their relapse. It is very difficult to see an addict relapse, but acceptance allows us to understand and accept their process. We show our acceptance by working our own program and praying for God's will, no matter how much we hurt, feel angry or want to "fix" someone. At times we may have to accept that being an example is the best we can do. Acceptance allows God's will to work instead of our own.

Before we came to NA, we were in a state of denial. Before we gain acceptance, we're often in denial and caught in the endless loop of our addiction. Admittance is the prerequisite to acceptance. Surrender and freedom are the results of acceptance. The war is over. Acceptance opens the door to new possibilities and hope for a better future. Acceptance is taking ownership for our own spiritual condition and our recovery. It's taking responsibility for who we are and what our needs are. Admittance is the beginning of our first step, but acceptance is vital to a full surrender. Once we admit, we can either go to resignation or to acceptance. There is a lot of freedom once we've gotten to acceptance. Acceptance allows us to relieve the pain of the past so we can live fully in the present.

Principle Number Four; Honesty (Final Draft Version)

No Limits Group of Narcotics Anonymous Ad hoc Literature Group

1a) Honesty is an addict's first line of defense against the disease of addiction. 1b) When we arrived in Narcotics Anonymous, we were desperate for a new way of life. 1c) We found that honesty offers relief from a life based in self deception and dishonesty. 1d) Our first taste of freedom from living the lie of addiction came when we admitted that we were an addict and that our lives had become unmanageable. 1e) We start to practice honesty when we admit we're an addict.

2a) We have found that many of us struggle practicing this principle in our lives. 2b) We need to remember that recovery is a journey and not an event. 2c) We need to start somewhere. 2d) Telling the truth takes practice. We must become vigilant in our practice

if we are to get anywhere at all. 2e) A good place to start is asking for help. 2f) Some of us have found sponsorship is a good place to start practicing honesty. 2g) Although we become vulnerable when we start telling the truth, our true strength lies in our willingness to be honest about who we really are and the areas in our lives we want to improve. 2h) Honesty frees us from the never ending battle of self deceit.

3a) we can start to hold our head high and look forward instead of looking over our shoulder in fear. 3b) Slowly but surely, honesty becomes a part of who we are. 3c) Honesty opens the door to endless possibilities that never existed before. 3d) We begin to dream about a time when we can be trusted. 3e) We begin to reap the benefits of recovery when honesty becomes a part of our lives. 3f) We can now continue our journey of recovery. 3g) It all starts with honesty.

Principle Number Five' **Open Mindedness (Final Draft Version)**

-No Limits Group of Narcotics Anonymous Adhoc Literature Group

For many of us open mindedness is unfamiliar territory. Before coming to NA, many of us could only see life through a small and narrow tunnel. We had our own agendas. Anything not on that agenda was quickly discarded. We had our own view of the world. We couldn't conceive of a life without drugs. We never would have dreamed that a life without drugs could be possible. Pain, insanity, and misery became our way of life. Our way of life produced unmanageability and catastrophic consequences. Through some miraculous event, our Higher Power saw fit to place us in the loving hands of Narcotics Anonymous.

Many of us struggled with open mindedness. It can be a difficult thing to open up to new people, places, things, and ideas. Fear can overwhelm us, and cause us to judge the unknown. We must have faith in the process of working the 12 steps with a sponsor if we are to be open to this new way of life. We can't expect to be open to new ideas if we are too afraid to try them. Open mindedness is becoming willing to accept other approaches to reach the same outcome. Although 12 steps of Narcotics Anonymous are the same for every addict, every addict doesn't work them the same way.

Instead of judging another addict, we might want to try talking to them about their experience, strength, and hope. In doing so, we gather new information that can help us with our own recovery. Knowledge is power. If we truly want to get better, we must tap into as many resources as possible. Listening to every addict share at a meeting is a good way to practice the spiritual principle of Open Mindedness. Our Higher Power decides who will be the instrument to deliver the medicine we need to change and grow. If we close our ears and minds to what has been placed before us, we limit our opportunity to grow spiritually.

Change and growth are part of the recovery process. If we want to get better we must be willing to stay open minded. Open mindedness helps us get better quicker. It helps us accept instead of hate. It allows us to respond instead of react. It guides us towards to spiritual principle of unconditional love as we begin to see to good that each person has to offer. The open mindedness that was once born out of desperation can turn into a spiritual principle that helps us to understand rather than be understood. Open minded, we can better continue our journey through the twelve steps and continue to find freedom beyond our wildest dreams.

Principle Number Six; Willingness (Final Draft Version)

-No Limits Group of Narcotics Anonymous Adhoc Literature Group

We can give another addict hope, but we cannot give them willingness. We become willing to move into action when we notice other happy addicts living a new way of life. Willingness is an inside job. If we want to find a new way of life in Narcotics Anonymous, we must be willing to do the necessary work. Our sponsor is not going to make a house visit and write our step for us. It is OUR responsibility to recover.

We become willing to go to a meeting when our disease wants us to stay home. Our willingness to recover pushes us to pick up the phone instead of the drug. It drives us to fulfill our service commitment even when it is not convenient. Willingness keeps us coming back to experience the miracle.

It is important to remember that anything we put before our recovery will be lost. Eventually our willingness brings spiritual wholeness that far surpasses any short-term gratification we experienced while using. When our spirit is broken through active addiction NA provides the alternative choice which is spiritual growth. As we do the work in NA we gradually attain the inner peace we have always sought.

We become willing to give to the fellowship that saved our lives. We find we are able to get out of ourselves and the tendency to be self-centered. We must always remember where we came from and be willing to carry the message of hope to the newcomer through service.

Principle Number Seven; Faith (Final Draft Version)

-No Limits Group of Narcotics Anonymous Adhoc Literature Group

Faith is being comfortable with the outcome before it happens. After working the first three steps with a sponsor, we begin to realize that God is in control of the outcome. The only thing we can do is work hard to get the desired results. For example, if an addict has to pass a test to get their plumber's license, it becomes necessary to study. The more

they study, the better they will do. We do the footwork and leave the results up to a Power greater than ourselves. If the addict actually does a thorough job preparing for the test, then most likely they will pass.

Sometimes, however, even when we do the work, the outcome does not go our way. This is where true faith can guide us from the negative to the positive. If we honestly did our best and failed, then God has another plan. When one door closes, another door opens. Maybe we take a class to help us pass the test and meet a study partner who gets us a job working for his family owned plumbing company. The point is that we are always given when we are willing to work. The outcome might not be the ways we had planned it; yet, things always work out for those willing to participate in the process.

Faith gives us a new confidence in life. We no longer have to miss out on new opportunities because we are too afraid to try. Faith is the fire extinguisher for fear. We begin to believe that anything is possible. Faith gives us the courage to be fearless in the pursuit of our dreams. With our new found excitement for life, we continue to work the steps with our sponsor and pray for the knowledge of God's will and the power to carry it out.

Principle Number Eight; Tolerance (Final Draft Version)

-No Limits Group of Narcotics Anonymous Adhoc Literature Group

Tolerance is allowing other views, practices, and beliefs. Being tolerant does not mean we totally accept the beliefs and practices of individuals. Tolerance allows us to sit in the same room with other addicts despite our differences. Practicing tolerance may be one of the spiritual principles that open the door to a newcomer finding a new way of life. Tolerance may lead to serenity, but at the very least a degree of acceptance.

Addicts, when they come into the fellowship of NA, may not be open minded, willing, or honest, but we practice tolerance when we allow them their process. We also practice tolerance with our sponsor when we call them and they are unavailable, we understand they have a life and we are not the center of it. We also do this when our spouse or significant other does not meet our expectations. We understand that they are right where they are supposed to be and give them the space that is needed.

Tolerance is allowing everyone's higher power to work in their lives. When an addict is struggling with practicing spiritual principles and we want to point out their shortcomings, we might want to stop and practice tolerance. Tolerance allows us to love them for where they are in their recovery.

Each addict's process is crucial to them finding a new way of life. When we see an addict that is struggling, it is important to leave self righteousness alone because we can't show

them the way. When we exercise tolerance, we don't feel the need to interfere with their process. We don't feel the need to inflict our will because we don't want to push an addict away from the life saving message of recovery. Tolerance is wrapped up in the fabric of all the spiritual principles keeping us on this journey called recovery.

Tolerance is wrapped up in the fabric in all of the spiritual principles that keep us on this journey called recovery.

Principle Number Nine; Patience (Final Draft Version)

-No Limits Group of Narcotics Anonymous Adhoc Literature Group

Most of us arrive at the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous with little understanding of patience. Our lives in active addiction centered on immediate gratification. We wanted what we wanted when we wanted it. Many of us come here with a sense of entitlement and obsessed with our own will. In the process of recovery, we learn that patience is the will or ability to wait without complaint. We also find that steadiness, endurance and perseverance are all essential aspects of patience.

The ability to be patient, to wait for good things to happen, is the key to successful recovery. If we are not patient and we demand results without putting in the necessary work for such positive changes, there is little hope for success. The spiritual principal of patience frees us from the stress created by placing high expectations on people and results. We learn we can't expect people to feel as we feel, or to see things as we see them.

We cultivate patience through step work and developing a conscious contact with our higher power. Where we previously would act impulsively, or become angry when things didn't go our way, we learn to pray and ask our Higher Power to help us accept life as it is, at its own pace, not ours. We learn to let go, and as a result experience a peace that many of us have never known.

Our early experiences in recovery with patience include enduring obsessions that we used to act on, knowing for the first time that they will pass when we surrender. We practice patience with uncomfortable or painful feelings without having to act in defect. Needless to say, like all other areas of our lives, we will not be perfect with this. It is

important to not become disheartened when we fall short and get angry with ourselves or others. This will happen, but the difference is we now have a solution. Patience does not always mean just sitting back and waiting for God to intervene. We do the footwork necessary, but then leave the results in our Higher Power's hands. Many of us have found that prayer, meditation, step writing and talking with our sponsor and other addicts help us through these difficult moments.

Patience allows us to be on God's time instead of our own. If we're rushing to a destination and arrive before we are supposed to be there, do we see what we're supposed to see? Do we talk to the people we're supposed to talk to? Many addicts have shared in meetings about coincidentally running into an addict in a store. Was this a coincidence or just a way for our Higher Power to keep His anonymity? When we rush from one place to the next, we never seem to arrive on time. We don't have meaningful conversations with others that could better our lives. We are so caught up in our destination, we miss the journey.

When we practice patience, we always arrive on time. We talk to the person we're supposed to talk to. We take the time to notice the beauty in nature that being clean has afforded us the ability to appreciate. We notice other people who might need help. Being impatient robs God of his plan. When we practice patience and slow our thoughts and actions, we begin to experience a new level of serenity. We begin to be at the right place at the right time. We arrive relaxed instead of in disarray. We start to understand that miracles happen in God's time instead of our own. Patience moves us closer to God's will and further away from our own, furthering us along the road of recovery.

Principle Number Ten: Humility (Final Draft Version)

-No Limits Group of Narcotics Anonymous Adhoc Literature Group

Like many of the spiritual principles, humility is gained over time. From the moment of our first surrender, we begin to experience humility. Humility is the result of applying the other spiritual principles in our life. We humbly ask for our shortcomings to be removed because we can't remove them ourselves. Practicing the 12 steps helps rid us

of the defects that cause us pain and suffering. Our relationship with the God of our understanding improves our spiritual condition.

Humility can simply be the quiet acceptance of ones self. It is knowing our strengths and weaknesses. It frees us from the shortcomings which can hinder our ability to experience God's grace. Humility allows us to give credit to a loving and caring higher power. We help the newcomer by giving away the love we've received from those who came before us. With our new found humility, we're better able to carry the message to the still sick and suffering addict.

A humble spirit helps us to identify with the still sick and suffering addict. Humility paves the way for the healing power of empathy. Through this empathy, we connect with the cries of distress that come from the lonely hearts of desperate addicts everywhere. This identification allows us to humbly and gratefully carry the message of Narcotics Anonymous.

Principle Number Eleven; Unconditional Love (Final Draft Version)

-No Limits Group of Narcotics Anonymous Adhoc Literature Group

Unconditional love is love with no boundaries, with no expectations. We allow others to be themselves freely. We love them as they are. Unconditional love is both a feeling and an action. The feeling is of empathy, tolerance and compassion. Unconditional love is a feeling of hope shared between two addicts. The action is by giving freely of ourselves, without expectation or judgment. The wordless feeling of hope that we receive in the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous keeps addicts coming back. "Just keep coming!" springs from this sentiment.

Some of us initially experience unconditional love when we walk into the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous and receive that first hug. Others are shocked to find out that people in Narcotics Anonymous will help without expecting anything in return. As we stay clean, we learn that fellow NA members only want to share a message of hope with us and to help us in our recovery. From the first day clean, addicts can share unconditional love.

Through step work, we develop a relationship with our Higher Power that becomes the basis of our ability to give away that which was so freely given to us. Letting in the love of our Higher Power allows us to practice that same unconditional love with other addicts. It may seem difficult at first to accept unconditional love, as many of us come into the fellowship starved of any intimate connections. Even the smallest gesture of kindness may bring tears to our eyes when we first get clean. Because we remember how much those early hugs and kindnesses meant to us, we share our gratitude by giving unconditional love when we see others struggling.

Principle Number Twelve; Caring and Sharing (Final Draft Version)

-No Limits Group of Narcotics Anonymous Adhoc Literature Group

The biggest weapon against the disease of addiction is another addict – we can't recover alone. So caring and sharing is one of the most important elements of Narcotics Anonymous because we'll die without it. Caring is any action that demonstrates love to another human being. It is a spiritual connection between two or more people and is an expression of a Higher Power's presence.

Caring and sharing can be many things – it can be unspoken identification; sharing our experience and hope with one another; it can be an empathic glance across a meeting; and it starts with a hug from the first moment we enter a meeting. Caring and sharing moves us from the cerebral to the spiritual. Caring is sharing even when you have fear. Sharing is a way to give back and one of the most basic ways that we give hope to one another. Hearing others care and share the NA way gives us a vacation from our own thoughts and allows us to enjoy the moment. Caring is sharing with intent to help others. We become aware of others feelings and needs, not just our own. Caring and sharing allows us to live in the moment and enjoy the therapeutic value of one addict helping another.

When you share, you give another addict the chance to relate. You let another addict know that they are not alone. We learn how to care and share by consistently showing up at meetings and being a part of the fellowship. We pray to be an instrument that helps other addicts instead of only helping ourselves. Sponsorship is one of the basic ways that we learn how to care and share in meetings and in the fellowship. Sharing with our sponsor allows us to experience our first real connection with someone who really cares about us and who we feel comfortable sharing with.

When we share, it puts us in the here and now. Even when we're not sharing, we can go to a meeting and hear someone else share and experience awareness that saves our lives. When we hear others share, we realize we are not different, we are not unique, we are not alone. Identifying with others gives us hope. Hearing others' experiences in recovery helps us grow. Sharing lets us know that change is possible.

When we hear people's experiences and how they stayed clean through them, we can let go of our own reservations. We realize that we can stay clean and recover. When we share, we recognize our diseased thought processes and open ourselves up for the solution.

Sometimes caring and sharing is getting out of our own self-centeredness to listen to another addict's struggle and share our experience and hope with them. Hearing another addict share their struggles and how they got through them gives us life saving hope, that no matter what we face in our own lives, we too can find freedom from addiction.

2. Update from The N.A.W.O.L. NEWS:

In May of 2007 when I first started the NAWOL News, if I am not mistaken the Newsletter went out to approximately 35 addicts and consisted of 3 sections with a total of 5 paragraphs. Today there are approximately 189 on our mailing list. I would like to see this number grow to at least 500. So please pass this newsletter on to others and if anyone sees this newsletter and would like to get on our mailing list, please send me your name and email address. Along with a request to be add to our mailing list. I can be reached either at lester1444@hotmail.com or lester7286@gmail.com. I prefer gmail for mailing mainly because their attachment size is higher. Also the more that we have in Numbers in the NA Society the better our chances will be when it comes to effecting change and the more we can carry the message of the NA Society.

3. Update from one of our newer members:

An Essay on our Service Structure and Area Restoration written for the NA Society.

_Lester, here's the entry I was going to add:

>
> I'm a recovering addict named Ernest and I serve my home group as GSR
> at our ASC. The founders' view of the service structure as being not
> a part of NA is something valuable that our fellowship seems to have
> lost since I got clean in NA in 1985. "All else is not NA" is a
> saying that now causes newer members a lot of concern.
>
> The area level is the first service level below the home group that
> most members get involved in. Starting as a GSR alternate and
> attending a few meetings with the group's GSR may be the first
> experience a member has with area service. If that new member is
> privileged to serve his group at an ASC where the meetings are
> conducted by the rules of order and the ASC's policy guidelines, that

> fortunate trusted servant will be able to learn from the beginning the
> true nature of the service structure.
>
> On the other hand, if a new trusted servant is exposed first to an
> ASC where the rules of order are unknown and the ASC meeting is
> conducted like an NA open discussion meeting, an inaccurate view of
> the service structure is going to be what the new servant learns.
> Without the rules of order, and policy guidelines, the primary purpose
> of the groups can't be served properly.
>
> Some ASC's are dominated by a few service junkie types with control
> issues. They may be officers who keep the same positions for several
> years in a row, or they may be GSR's who use their positions to
> represent themselves instead of their groups. They may also be NA
> members who hold no office or group representative position but who
> come to ASC meetings and insist on being in on the discussion of
> business and horn in by gaining the floor improperly, breaking in and
> saying "I'm Joe Blow and I'm an addict", as though they are attending
> an NA meeting rather than an ASC meeting.
>
> The rules of order are an effective means of keeping meetings on
> track, but they must be observed to be effective. The 12 Concepts and
> the Guide to Local Service have had a somewhat detrimental effect on
> the conduct of service committee meetings. The concepts give
> inexperienced servants a false view of the service

structure and the

> GTLS contains misinformation about parliamentary procedure.

>

> Here are a few points that may help GSR's and ASC officers who want

> to help their ASC's to become effective in aiding the member groups in

> fulfilling their primary purpose:

>

> 1.

> An ASC is a committee created by the groups of an area for the

> purpose of furthering the groups' fulfillment of the groups'

> Traditional primary purpose: to carry the message to the addict who

> still suffers.

>

> b. The groups are the members of an ASC, and GSR's are their

> representatives. The servants of the ASC are the officers, who are

> not voting members and who must refrain from joining the discussion of

> area business. The one exception provided for in the rules of order

> is that the chair may join the discussion, so long as he/she hands

> over the conduct of the meeting to the vice chair for the remainder of

> the meeting. This should only be allowed on passage by majority vote

> of a motion by a GSR.

>

> c. No person attending the ASC meeting, other than GSR's or their

> alternates, should be allowed to gain the floor during the conduct of

> ASC business. Many ASC's have an Open Forum period of 20 or so

> minutes in which an officer of the ASC or an interested NA member may

> gain the floor in order to make a statement to the ASC or to ask
> questions of the GSR's. Open Forum should be the only time that
> persons other than GSR's or alternates may gain the floor.
>
> 2.
> a. An ASC meeting is NOT an NA meeting. The ASC meets to conduct
> the business of the member groups. This business involves the
> spending of 7th Tradition funds and is serious business with serious
> responsibility for the trusted servants involved.
Discussion of
> business issues influences the vote on motions brought by the member
> groups' representatives and formal group conscience meetings are the
> one source of contact with our group's ultimate authority. GSR's are
> carrying their group conscience to and from the ASC meetings and
> should never be subject to any other influence on their votes.
>
> b. An ASC meeting is NOT a forum for "sharing" in which any NA
> member can gain the floor by simply speaking up and identifying
> themselves as an addict. Participation is by election only, which
> draws a very definite distinction between an ASC meeting and an NA
> meeting. For this reason, GSR's should avoid using the standard NA
> meeting opening line ("I'm_____ and I'm an addict"), and instead should
> identify by stating his/her name and the member group represented,
> such as: "Delbert of New Life Group". This has the advantage of
> helping all GSR's and officers come to know the GSR by

name and home

> group, as well as establishing the distinction between the service

> structure and meetings of the fellowship.

>

> 3.

> Robert's Rules of Order are the basic accepted authority for the

> conduct of business at most ASC meetings. Knowing those rules and the

> details of your ASC's policy guidelines is necessary if helping your

> ASC become effective is what you hope for. Knowing what motions

> should be made, when they should be made and whether an interruption

> is allowable for a motion is essential. Here is a useful online RR site:

>

> <http://www.robertsrules.org/>

>

> Explore the site, and copy the quick reference motions chart.

> Distribute copies of the chart to other GSR's. It's also a good idea

> to print out the scanned copy of the old Service Manual in the

> archives and to show it to newer trusted servants.

>

> ILS,

> Ernest

4. **Update from the NArchives:**

Of no affiliation with N.A.W.O.L. or any other organizations are the NArchives a completely independent web site for the sole purpose of displaying NA Archives and making them freely available to the fellowship of NA. Many members of the NA society have contributed both their archives and their time to making this a reality. For the member who is interested in the History of NA and researching our archives this is a good website to go visit. <http://magshare.org/narchive/>

Hey Family,

As some of you may or may know, Chris B. and I have been on quite the exciting and rewarding adventure this past year of digitizing the archives that Joseph P. gave Kermit O. Chris and I then gave Bo S. a copy, and he passed it on to Chris M. to be posted on the magshare.magnaws.com/narchive website.

In Dec. 08, I picked Bo up at the Atlanta Airport, he flew in after speaking in Canada, and we proceeded to pick-up 20 boxes of his Archives from his Mom's home and transport them to my home in Raleigh, NC. When we got to Raleigh, we took a quick inventory of the Archives and sadly we discovered that the WLC minuets and the microfiche were not there. Major Bummer.

So, I am asking all NA Society members that if you have copies of the WLC minuets from the 7 Lit. Conferences from 79 thru 82 or if you know anyone who might have a copy, whether in part or in whole, contact Chris and I at NAHistorylovers@gmail.com.

What Bo did have were pictures of the Memphis Conference and the taped recordings of the Progress Meetings and Group Conscience Meetings at Memphis. Chris immediately digitized the pictures and then started on the tapes. We now have most of the tapes digitized for preservation. Yea!

From the information of Bo's and Joseph's archives, we then created a PowerPoint Presentation which we showed at the USCCNA in Greenville SC in February. About 75 people attended and it was well received. We hope to be showing at the Durham Convention in July.

After the convention in Greenville and the favorable response, we then got the bright idea to put this on DVD so all the fellowship could view this information. The transferring of PowerPoint to DVD has become a huge challenge for Chris. Technical problem after technical problem keeps rearing its ugly head. Chris has logged in over 125 hours in the creating and attempting to convert to DVD the PowerPoint Presentation. So when he gets it finished, he deserves Big Kudos for all the hard work he has put it.

So Family, that's where we are now. I'm looking forward to starting the organizing and scanning of Bo's Archives. I'll leave with one last story.

My girlfriend Amy K. and I were looking for a Booklet in Bo's Archives the other weekend and she was looking thru this particular box when she just stopped and stared for the longest time. "Honey are you alright?" was my question. "Better than alright, look what I have found. Its copies of the Cut and Paste that became our Basic Text. What I'm looking at is the birth of our Book." And she just stared for the longest time. "Kinda AWE

inspiring isn't it." I said. Amy followed with "More than AWE inspiring, it chills me to the bone. This, for all practical purposes, is the birth of our fellowship." It sends me goose bumps as I'm writing this. I hope you feel the same way when you view it on the website. Until next time.

In Very Loving Service,
Boyd P.

PS The name of the PowerPoint Presentation is "The History of the Basic Text"
"How We Got Our Book".

Editor's Note: here is a link to the NArchive at

<http://magshare.magnaws.com/narchive/>

Open NArchive folder then open the 1980 folder and then open Folder on the [2nd World Literature Conference - Lincoln, NE 1980](#) many of the cut and paste items can be found here. Boyd and/or Chris can be contacted at nahistorylovers@gmail.com info regarding the PowerPoint presentation they did.

3. Submitted by Dalin A on April 7,2009

April 7

The Value of The Past

"This firsthand experience in all phases of illness and recovery is of unparalleled therapeutic value. We are here to share it freely with any addict who wants to recover."

Basic Text p. 10

Most of us came into the program with some serious regrets. We had never finished high school, or we had missed going to college. We had destroyed friendships and marriages. We had lost jobs. And we knew that we couldn't change any of it. We may have thought that we'd always be regretful and simply have to find a way to live with our regrets.

On the contrary, we find that our past represents an untapped gold mine the first time we are called on to share it with a struggling newcomer. As we listen to someone share their Fifth Step with us, we can give a special form of comfort that no one else could provide - our own experience. We've done the same things. We've had the same feelings of shame and remorse. We've suffered in the ways only an addict can suffer. We can relate - and so can they.

Our past is valuable - in fact, priceless - because we can use all of it to help the addict who still suffers. Our Higher Power can work through us when we share our past. That

possibility is why we are here, and its fulfillment is the most important goal we have to accomplish.

Just for today: I no longer regret my past because, with it, I can share with other addicts, perhaps averting the pain or even death of another.

pg. 101

Part of recovery is becoming whole and that includes relationships. But we must be a whole person seeking a whole person, not a broken person seeking another to become whole.

*It's not a question of me finding the right person, but
Becoming the right person. (Especially if I'm
Already with someone!)*

Positivity

When faced with the consequences of past choices,
See the gift of a lesson rather than the curse of a fall.

New to NA

Narcotics Anonymous meetings are a gathering of recovering addicts, who meet regularly for the purpose of recovery from the disease of addiction.

What to expect at an NA meeting:

- Although meetings may be located at a variety of publicly accessible buildings, meeting locations do not imply affiliation.
- Meetings use a variety of formats such as Participation, Speaker, Topic Discussion, Book Study, New Comer, Question and Answer, etc. [Find a meeting that fits your needs.](#)
- There are no attendance monitors at meetings and we are under no surveillance at any time. Most meetings last from 1 to 1 ½ hours.

- When you arrive at your first meeting you can expect to see recovering addicts welcoming each other and socializing. It is not uncommon for new members to be warmly welcomed.
- You may see information pamphlets, books and activity flyers. Feel free to take pamphlets and flyers. Books are for sale at cost.
- The leader typically will open the meeting with a moment of silence followed by readings, and announcements. The leader will then ask if newcomers and visitors would like to introduce themselves. Participation in meetings is voluntary.
- The leader opens up the meeting for members to speak on any subject related to recovery. Members will speak, sharing their experience, strength and hope. Sharing is voluntary. We do not respond to other people's shares (as in conversation) but from his or her own experience.
- While members are sharing we refrain from side conversations and other distracting activities that may disrupt the meeting.
- There are no fees or dues to attend a NA meeting. We are self supporting through our own contributions. You will see a basket being passed, to collect donations from members to pay rent for the meeting place, purchase literature, refreshments, etc.

As Narcotics Anonymous continues to grow as a worldwide fellowship we have found it difficult to obtain and keep suitable meeting locations. With that in mind we ask that members please:

- Be quiet when arriving and departing from meeting facilities
- Remember that others may be offended by our tone and language.
- Dispose of trash and cigarette butts appropriately.

Before we got clean, most of our actions were guided by impulse. Today, we are not locked into this type of thinking.” Basic Text p. 87

How did impulsive behavior affect you in active addiction? How has impulsive behavior affected you in recovery? What have you done to eliminate this behavior in your recovery?

Learning to live life one day at a time...."

My girlfriend went into her office a couple hours late today because of an early doctor's appointment and found that 14 people in her department had been laid off that morning. I'm home recovering from a gallbladder operation and may need an additional three

surgeries - painful ones at that - for other things. It's easy to get overwhelmed with what's going on in the world and in our lives, and that's when I remember that I can get through anything as long as I take it one day at a time.

It didn't always used to be like this. Before I had the tools of the program, even the smallest things would overwhelm me. I constantly lived in a state of anxiety and when something did happen, panic wasn't far behind. I have a mind that is good at painting dark scenarios, and I have lived each imagined one to its bitter end. My life used to be pretty unmanageable.

One of the gifts of recovery has been learning to live in the present. When I can keep my mind in the same place as my feet, then I always find I'm alright. I'm taken care of; I have everything I need; I'm safe, and I can even find things to be grateful for. Once I focus my attention on what is happening now, I can even experience the peace and joy in my life that is always present when I acknowledge them.

And it all comes from learning to live one day at a time

You have to listen more than you talk.
You have to give more than you get.
You have to smile more than you frown.
You have to think "we" more than you think "me."
You have to agree more than you disagree.
You have to compliment more than you criticize.
You have to laugh more than you cry.
You have to clean up more than you mess up.

You have to be positive more than you're negative.
You have to be fascinated more than you're frustrated.
You have to "walk the talk"
more than you "talk the talk."
You have to be accepting more than rejecting.
You have to see the cup "half-full" more
than you see it "half-empty."
You have to help more than you hinder.

You have to believe in yourself
more than you doubt yourself.

You have to work more than you whine.
You have to do more than you don't.
You have to act more than you react.
You have to save more than you squander.
You have to care more than you ever have.
You have to love more than you ever have.

If you want what we have – do what we do

By following the lead of old timers, you can learn to be one, if you can allow yourself to become teachable.

Here's one example. "Old timers" attend business meetings regularly and vote that we eliminate smoke breaks from meetings. Next month, Newcomers decide to attend JUST to vote it back in. Let me say that again – old timers vote it out, newcomers vote it back in. Can you read between the lines there? Just in case not, I'll explain. Follow the lead of people trying to show you how to get some clean time. People with significant clean time are attempting to show newer members how to resist cravings, an hour at a time, 5 minutes at a time. But newcomers ALWAYS know better and think smoke breaks are necessary. We have a name for this – it's called self-will run riot. We come here not having a clue how to do life, yet we tell the people that do, that we know better than them how meetings should run. I've seen this happen over and over again in the course of my recovery. Here we are in a room, learning how to resist our obsessive compulsions, and we choose to stop, break the continuity of our recovery meetings, to go out and practice our addictions. (Many old timers also smoke by the way...yet are able to resist urges for an hour or so). We don't lock the door - you're free to go out and smoke at any time, so why make people who want to resist cravings stop to indulge YOUR addiction, at the cost of a quality meeting with continuity. You want more fellowshipping time? Come early and stay late. I can't even begin to count the newcomers who bailed at smoke break, never to return. Many many times, there will be 20 people in the meeting at the start, and only 6 or 8 after the break. Had they stayed another 30 minutes they just may have heard what they needed to save their lives. I think they left 5 minutes before the miracle happened. This is not fulfilling our primary purpose.

"We're not interested in what you have done in the past...ONLY in what you want to do about your problem and how we can help." The past includes today and yesterday's drama; Recovery includes today and yesterdays solutions, which lead us into how to live tomorrow. Experience, strength and hope, experience is only a small part of how we get to the strength and hope, the important part. IF you don't get there, you WILL repeat the (bad) experiences. Keep doing what you're doing you will keep getting what you are getting. If you MUST talk about the experience, please keep it short and move directly into

what you want to do about it and how we can help. We all know how to use and run unmanageable lives; we don't need any more examples or stories about that.

Atmosphere of recovery?

Some of our meetings have been a mess lately. Our personal recovery depends upon NA unity. We come here with a disease as serious as a heart attack. It is important that we are not grim faced white knuckled serious people, yet an atmosphere of recovery must prevail in our meetings. We come here to save our lives, not to play games, play grab ass, chit chat, cross talk, gossip, get laid, tell war stories, and point out the differences. When you do this, it sets the example to others and more do it. Sometimes we have the inmates running the asylum here, and the atmosphere of recovery deteriorates. Newcomers leave, old-timers leave, and that is sad. Saving our lives is not a game, and this is not just a "new playground". As members of Narcotics Anonymous, we have a responsibility to newcomers to show them a new way of life. We come here in Unity, sharing a common bond. We don't know how to live life and enjoy it, yet our actions often alienate the very people capable of showing us how to do so. If you can't engage in appropriate behavior, and help us to fulfill our primary purpose, please come back when you're willing to learn.

I'm saddened, no ashamed that many old timers no longer come around our meetings. Many go elsewhere seeking recovery. This program gave them their wonderful lives, yet they are not here to share it. Why? I've been told that NA meetings are too "dysfunctional". I am here to tell you that it works just fine, but we have strength in numbers. And I can also tell you that those disruptive members who are here only to take don't stay. Only about 10% of the people who walk in the doors stay. Which ones? Well,

We ONLY keep what we have by giving it away, if that gives you a clue. Do you contribute to the atmosphere of recovery?

If you're chairing a meeting, Please try to "steer" the meeting and keep the focus on recovery. This includes telling people when they have gone on too long, and bringing the topic back to recovery when it drifts. Uncomfortable, yes, vital, yes, if we want to stay. Remember this; part of sharing is sharing time. Try to monitor yourself as to when your 5 minutes is up.

Do you choose to be part of the solution, or part of the problem? Are you carrying the message or spreading the disease? War stories are the disease, talking about your problem and how we can help takes us to the solution.

"You have to learn to Listen, cuz you have to Listen to Learn". We have a step study

meeting, with the intent of helping one another understand and work steps. Do you share about the steps, or about daily drama? In the step study meeting, if you don't know anything about the step, just ask. You'll certainly find someone who has been where you are and will help you to the solution. If you have nothing to share about the step or steps, learn to listen. I know when I am talking I am not learning. Yet I know I have to share what I have, so I can keep it. Sometimes there isn't a lot of time to do that if the meeting time is wasted listening to drama. There's a time to take the cotton out of your ears and put it in your mouth. If you can't talk about the steps, this would be one of those times. You most likely WILL hear things that will help you live your recovery.

I love this program and am dedicated to never turning my back on the program that saved my life. I have a very strong desire for quality recovery meetings. I never want to have the crap that goes on in our meetings drive me or anyone else out of the rooms. Follow the lead of old timers; you just may turn into one. The problem is Me, the Solution is WE. You can be part of the solution. Please help us to fulfill our primary purpose so our beloved program thrives.

1. We admitted we were powerless over nothing, that we could manage our lives perfectly and those of anyone else who would allow us.
2. Came to believe that there was no power greater than ourselves and the rest of the world was insane.
3. Made a decision to have our loved ones turn their wills and their lives over to our care even though they couldn't understand us at all.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of everyone we knew.
5. Admitted to the whole world at large the exact nature of everyone else's wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to make others straighten up and do right.
7. Demanded that others either shape up or ship out.
8. Made a list of all persons who had harmed us and became willing to go to any lengths to get even with them all.
9. Got direct revenge on such people wherever possible except when to do so would cost us our lives or at the very least, jail.
10. Continued to take inventory of others and when they were wrong promptly and repeatedly told them about it.
11. Sought through bitching and nagging to improve our relations with others as we could not understand them at all, asking only that they knuckle under and do things our way.
12. Having had a complete mental, emotional, spiritual and physical breakdown as a result of these steps we tried to blame everyone else and

continued to practice these principles in all our affairs, until death, jails or institutions intervened and kicked our asses real good.

4. **Input from Bo submitted April 11th 2009:**

Dear Lester,

NA Society

I began my recovery back in the middle seventies and so got to watch and help the WSC grow. We went from 3 regions in the whole world to 28 in one year! Got to participate in 1982 (?) with the WSC Policy Committee re-write of the service structure to include a WSC Committee with double checks and safe guards between the WSB, WSC and WSO. The WSC Committee is sorta like NAWS except for the report accountability and the safe guards. We always predicated a large and well-informed body of membership to make the big decisions. Like the AA structure, we saw NAWS as a service center that would stay out of NA politics. Ah, the beauty of hind sight. Where did we put the money, property and prestige?

"NA is a Fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem." We have all become aware of how quickly money, property and prestige are associated with greed, lust (for more!) and prestige. Fame, pride and power over others are major mood altering conditions. It takes a degree of spiritual growth to be able to turn these things over to a loving, ultimate authority and go our way in peace. Working on the NA Way of Life book which has involved hundreds of members so far, it became obvious to a working group in Dalton, Georgia that the NA Society was the key to understanding real NA. The societal connections reach out into every individual and gathering of members world-wide. With wide-open communications like we are developing today among the general Fellowship, any member can become as informed as they care to and in time, this should steady out our ship some. It is useless to condemn individuals who just happened to be walking in a part of the sidewalk where there was a big hole left there in the 1980's. My personal belief is that the more members are involved with something, the more they will support it later on. Yeah, it takes some discipline and restraint on the part of the leadership but this is a spiritual Fellowship, not a kindergarten. Recovery turns the world on its head. This is what was never going to happen - for addicts to get together and work out a way to stay clean, help others and grow spiritually. National armies, governments and modern medicine cannot do what we do. So, let's be grateful and look for ways to do our part in making it better - better for all of us. We have so much to be grateful for and so many resources.

Just acknowledging the NA Society - which includes everyone in NA today - we cut on a light switch. World services can retire with honor and the creative juices within NA can

flow once more. Getting good, accurate and fresh information is the first step to improving a system. We know there are only a few steps between monarchy and anarchy. The middle ground is a republic based on democratic principles. A monarchy is dependent on the ministers who tell the king what the heck is going on. Anarchy only exists until someone has to ask what to do next, then it becomes an oligarchy again. Republic as a word is based on representation of a body of people in an organized setting for the purpose of working out solutions that are both fair and workable to all concerned. That is probably the best we can do, with God's help. What have we got now? How is it responsible to those who are supposed to be served? Think about these questions. They form the base upon which we build.

In Loving Service,

Bo S.

My Observation's:

Recently, when I was talking with Bo, after his move to Atlanta, he mentioned that he had run into an old friend (one of the old timers in Atlanta), a man who had spent years and years doing Service work in the Atlanta Area for NA. and was well known and respected in the community. Bo then said that when he ran into this person that some of the 1st words out his mouth were that He was he was now ready to start working on NAWOL projects. The reason I mention this is that there are many of us who have grown up in NA. and we all have our stories and experiences in NA. A funny thing about history is that it is usually presented as the view of a few likeminded people when two or three of us could experience the same thing and all have different interpretations of what we witnessed. It is for this reason that I think that in order to get good over all view we need to examine our history from all of the different perspectives.

To me the NA Society gives us the format in which to do this while our main function is seeking out new ways to better serve our fellowship. No matter where wear at on the scale of time in NA we all have our personal experiences in NA. and we need to share them with others. This along with our Steps and Traditions is how we grow in our Recovery.

Are work on the NA Way of life is nearing its completion. We have written most of what can be written. What we need to do now is some final editing for a 2009 or 2010 version and then group conscience the book. What we have left is work on the NA Society. We need personal stories of recovery and related experiences. Even World Services and the WB are beginning to see the need to get more fellowship evolvment as evidenced by their "Living Clean Project". At N.A.W.O.L. We have several Projects that are in need of work.

Projects:

NA Twenty Plus http://nawol.org/2008_NA%20Twenty%20Plus.htm
The Spirit of NA http://www.nawol.org/2008_The%20Spirit%20of%20NA.htm
Letters Of support http://nawol.org/2008_letters.htm
The NA Society Journal <http://sites.google.com/site/nasocietyjournalprojectgroup/>

Other Links:

The NAWOL News <http://groups.google.com/group/nawolnews?hl=en>
NAWOL <http://nawol.org/> (Beginning next week ,look for updates to the NAWOL Site, Bo, has been without a computer for a short time due to his recent move but should have everything back up and running sometime this week.

Also if anyone has any Archives that we can submit to the NArchive site <http://magshare.magnaws.com/narchive/> please scans a copy and sends it to me and I will forward it the site owner posting.

Lester O.

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New Ph. # 321-208-4412

Below is a letter of Support and the Story from the NA Twenty Plus Project. That generated the letter.

Appleton, WI USA

I wanted to thank the NA Way of Life for adding my story to NA Twenty Plus. I am not a reader or writer. I had left NA for ten years. I had come back and ran across the website and decided to write my story. Not still feeling a part of NA – I did it anyway. I understood the need and cause but I never understood how it would make me feel.

When I found out that my story was published on the website – I dropped to my knees. Wow! Someone just gave me affirmations. I started telling people about the website and I told them its like sharing in a meeting and someone walks up to you and says, “What you had to share helped me allot.”

It’s a warm and loving feeling that maybe I am worth something and I do need to be here. Now the story is being printed in my area newsletter from the NA Way of Life website under Experience, Strength and Hope.

This is a man that does not read or write but now I do read most days. I am currently reading the *Tradition Wars* at home. I bought a local newspaper and read some of that while I was working. I found it really boring compared to the *Tradition Wars*. I am hooked on reading NA literature today. I am still in love with NA.

David D.

David D.

Appleton, Wisconsin USA

NA Purist

My name is David D and I am an Addict. I grew up in Sheboygan WI, a town of 50,000 people. Growing up I had my name and picture in the newspaper for something good one day and then the police would be at the door the next day for something bad. My first drug deal was going to Boy Scout camp. With me, I took two packs of cigs, one pack of menthol and one pack of non-menthol, and half a bottle of vodka I had found on the side of the road. My friend was going to get me some weed. The plan was to get drunk away from home so my parents would not know. But they found the cigs and vodka before I left and they were not going to let me go. They could not understand why I had two packs of different cigs. At this point I never smoked or did any drugs. The troop leader talked them into letting me go. When I was at camp my friend had gotten the weed. I paid him for it and then smoked it. And boy did I cough. I said I don't feel any different and he said the first time you don't. I found out that it was weed and not marijuana. Yes, weed from the field. I got my picture in the paper from that camp. It was another five years before I would use. When I did start using it went from 0 to 60 in seconds. My using was alcohol, real weed, speed and LSD.

When I got married I would go out for a pack of cigs and come home two days later and no cigs. Six months after I got married I went in to treatment for 29 days. I got out and relapsed many times. My sponsor would say "Well you had two weeks clean before you went out. Don't you see what a miracle that is?"

I thought that I needed some discipline so I signed up with United States Army Reserves. That did not help me to stop using. I went to basic training and got my divorce papers while in basic training. When I got out of basic training I came home and had to move in with my parents. I could only stay clean for weeks at a time then went back out. And when I did use I would not come home. I went to a friend's house to use for three days at 11:30 pm and he finally said "David, you're going to have to leave." I told him that I had no place to go.

I left my friend's house and walked two blocks, climbed over a wall and curled up in the snow and tried to sleep. I could only keep part of my body warm at a time. It was hell all night long. I was shaking violently. The sun came up and I sat on the wall feeling the warmth of it. It felt so good. Here I am on a street that goes nowhere. There was no reason

for anyone to drive down this street. At this time in my life I had no job, no money, no friends, no car, and recovery did not work. I was thinking “How will I kill myself?” I thought of many ways and decided that this is what I am going to do. Then my parents show up in the car. What the hell. They asked me, “David what are you doing?” I told them that I just went for a walk. They said “Get in the car, we will take you home.”

I went with them and I took a shower. I had not had one in three days. In the shower I was thinking what do I do? I had tried meetings for alcohol. Then I remembered the drug meetings that I had gone to while in treatment. So I got on the phone looking for a drug meeting. They told me where there was one and I walked two miles to get to that meeting.

The meeting started and the people started to share and each time I thought “Wow, are you messed up.” I listened to one story after another and I was thinking that I should leave. Then a man had shared that the drugs were a symptom of the disease. I thought well he must never have had a problem with drugs. I could not wait to get away from those freaks. The meeting ended with the Lord’s Prayer and I tried to run out of there as fast as I could. This was not for me. But they kept hugging me. Finally I thought that I was out of there and oh no here comes that man that does not have a drug problem. He gave me a hug and puts his hand on my shoulder and says “We need you here.” Instantly I felt I was home. The man bends over and showed me a meeting list and where the next meeting was held and I told him that this was the best meeting that I was ever at and that I will definitely be at the next meeting. That day was January 8, 1985, and I have been clean ever since. This year I gave that man my 23 year NA medallion and thanked him for my 23 years of being clean. If he would not have said that we need you here I would never have come back to NA.

I went to 89 meetings in 90 days and on day 90 I felt like using mentally and physically. I was trying to not think about using. I had spent the day with my sponsor. We went to a NA meeting that night. When I came home and was in bed I had thought “why did I have such a bad urge to use?” I did all the right things and went to meetings. I had a sponsor and did use him and did all the right things to stay clean. Then it hit me – it was because I am an addict. This was a turning point for me. I still had no job, no money, and no car. I went to functions all over the Midwest. Another addict drove us all over and said if you have gas money or not, I am going and you can come along. It was a great time. Every function that I went to I would talk to someone that I never met. Then I got a job in a foundry. I got a car and spent three years paying it forward by driving other addicts to functions and meetings. At the time there were only one or two functions within three states. I remember working on the NA 3rd edition revised basic text at workshops and then voting on it in meetings. At the time, I did not know how important that this was.

You see for me, when I started service work, I did this at 90 days clean. Someone had asked me if I wanted to go along with them to area service. I asked them what they did there. He told me and I asked him, “do you take lunch?” He said yes that we go out to eat.

Coffee and fries are what kept me clean. After the Friday night meeting we would go out for coffee and fries. Meetings were awesome but I needed something to do after the meetings and this made me feel part of that group. Those people had become my friends for 23 years. I did service work back then but did not want to be there. But somewhere it says to do the things we don't want to do. But the coffee and fellowship were always great.

Years went by and at around eight years clean I was doing all the right things and I found a church and attended it for a few years. I found God but a couple of addicts at the church said that God removed their addiction and that I don't need recovery. They went back to using. Red flag! I am out of here. I left the church but did not leave God.

I woke up one morning and turned the bathroom light on and looked in the mirror and spit at myself. Welcome to the next phase of recovery. I spent the next four months in therapy dealing with my feelings. What a kick in the butt that was. I got done with therapy and people said "Wow, you had changed and I like it." This gave me the self esteem to move forward in life. I worked on many things. Perfectionism was one thing I was working on at this time. I did not like to speak in front of big crowds. I probably went to 15 conventions and never went up to the podium to share. So I asked the Wisconsin Convention Committee if I could chair a workshop on perfectionism and they said yes. So I did the work shop and I did not do a great job. It was not perfect. That's what made it perfect.

I was inactive in the United States Army Reserves for three years and the 1st Gulf War had started and I went to the recruiter to go back in to the Reserves. I was in formation one week later and got inspected by a 3 star general my first day back. I completed my last year and got out.

Then I went to truck driving school and started driving over the road. I look back and this is where I started missing meetings. I was out for four to five weeks at a time. I would get to a state and have time to call the 800# hotline for a meeting and a ride. I had to go to another fellowship because NA did not have contact info out there. I did this a few times and got off the road a year later. I got a local driving job and I went to NA meetings once in a while. Then, I went three years before I went to another NA meeting and someone came up to me and asked me to speak at a dance. Being an NA purist I said "did you not hear what I had said that I have not been to a meeting for 3 years?" I told them no, that this would not be a good message of recovery. I went to another NA meeting about three months later and someone asked me if I would speak at a treatment center and I said "so you can use me as how not to work a recovery program?" My next NA meeting had 65 people at it and the topic was the 12 promises of AA. I was sick to my stomach. I was going to say something but what hurt was that they all loved the idea.

I had gotten into a relationship with another recovering addict at this time. I had got promoted to dock supervisor and then to operations manager at my job. I said to my self that this is because of NA. Then I bought my own semi-truck and became an owner

operator for 10 years. I made a lot of money but made very little NA meetings. What hurt the most were the NA anniversaries. I was high-fiving myself but I missed being with other addicts. Sometimes I would make a function or convention.

And then I found the casinos and this was to become the next symptom of my addiction to make my life insane and unmanageable. During the next phase of my recovery I went through a lot of money and kept doing a mental check to see if it had made my life unmanageable and the answer was no. Well, the answer ended up being yes. I had thought that I was working a program when I did not attend NA meetings. I don't know what had kept me clean. The relationship that I was in was a big thing. Without that relationship I don't think I would be clean. The Serenity Prayer was - can I change it? That's it. Where things did go bad for me was not attending NA meetings and not having a home group. What's funny is that I was still grateful and I am forever grateful for NA for giving me a great life.

I have cars today, a great relationship of 15 years, a place to live and some toys. And so on. This is it. I am going back to meetings to give back to NA. They need my help. They need to see you can have clean time and get a great life. So I made it back home after 10 years to give it away.

My first function back I made was the 20th Live the Steps or Freeze. This is the area function that I had started and had put on the first two. I started looking at all the things I had done in NA that became a part of NA history. So I was looking at NA history and started looking for a NA text 2nd edition because I had one given to me while I was in treatment. I went online looking for one and came up with things signed by Jimmy K and other people. I called up a friend that's more in touch with the NA history than me and I told him that I knew who Jimmy K is but who the hell is this Bo guy? My friend reminded me of whom Bo was and that we had spent the weekend with him at a convention in the late 80s. My friend had put Bo up on a pedestal and then I remembered who Bo was and I saw him as just another recovering addict. What these men, my recovering friends and I did was that we played a part of NA history. We started areas and regions and so many other wonderful things. But I never looked at it as NA history. We were just doing our job to help another suffering addict.

I have a home group today. I got a sponsor today. I recently went back to visit a regional meeting and I have decided to be a GSR for my home group. I have been reaching out for help. Funny thing is I came back to NA wanting to give back and help you because my life was good and it all backed fired right in my face. I have gotten more from NA than I can ever give back. I have never loved myself more. I have never loved my life more. The lady I am going to marry I have never loved more and today I am in love with NA. Thank you NA for 23 years of being clean.

NAME: _____ PH. # CELL _____

HM. _____

ADDRESS: _____ Clean

Date _____

_____ EMAIL (1) _____

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