



Together We Can

N.A. GROUPS OF THE FREE STATE REGION NEWSLETTER

217 N. Warwick Avenue • Baltimore, Maryland 21223

Regional Hot-Line: 1-800-317-3222

TOGETHER WE CAN

SEPT. 2023

Thought for the Month

*"By sharing our experience, strength, and hope with other addicts,
we provide a powerful example for newcomers to follow."*

(Just for Today, July 1st)

Acronym of the Month
P R I D E

P EOPLE
R EREFUSING
I NFORMATION
D ESPITE
E VIDENCE

*Have you done any
SERVICE WORK lately?*

There are lots of ways to serve
the fellowship ...
Choose a subcommittee and
get involved, you'll be
grateful you did!

GO TO:
freestatena.org
**FOR ZOOM & LIVE
NA MEETINGS**



"Gratitude is not just a mood. It is a course of action, a way of setting ourselves in relation to the world."

From Living Clean, pg. 63"

N.A. HISTORY

DID YOU KNOW ... Another version of the NA symbol designed by Jimmy. In this symbol, it is clear the lines were meant to serve as directional markings such as those found on

*Editors for the Sept. issue
of "Together We Can"*

Jonelle L. - Baltimore
Milton W. - Baltimore
Peggy S. - NEFA

N.A. Readers Write

The following articles are the opinions of the writers, and do not represent the opinion of this committee or the fellowship as a whole. We have given permission to all other Service Boards and Committees of the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous to reprint any material appearing in this publication.

Being Clean Is Not Enough

I recall this question being on my 1st Step and I was fairly new when I started doing step work. But even back then I understood that recovery was about more than just not using drugs.

I didn't learn that the easy way though. Over the many years of trying to do things my way, I had numerous brief periods when I was able to abstain from drug use. I even went 8 1/2 years without using my drug of choice. Yet, I had no clue what recovery was about, and I surely didn't want to hear anything about me being an addict. I was arrogant, verbally abusive and a downright miserable and insecure person.

I was employed, established and "socially acceptable", so why should I ever consider the problem was me? Blaming others was much easier than looking at myself. I had accomplished many academic, financial and materialistic goals, but I never really learned how to live life on its own terms. Our program says we have to change "completely" or risk going back to active addiction. Too bad I didn't know back then, because when things didn't go my way I medicated my feelings or tried to escape reality with drugs, sex and anything else. I ended up losing almost everything except my life.

Sure, I could get clean but I could never deal with the feelings without going back to using. The program has taught me that recovery is about changing who I am as a person. Changing the way I think, my attitudes and my behaviors. I've also learned that recovery is about becoming free. Free to be the best I can be. Freedom from shame and guilt and freedom to live true to the morals and values I abandoned during active addiction.

I know that getting clean must come first and **continuous abstinence** is the foundation on which my recovery is built, but just for today living the program involves much more than being clean. Acquiring clean time is just one of many parts of the recovery process, **not recovery itself.**

Anonymous

(Reprinted from "Inside the Rooms" March 2002)

It Changed My Life

There is a thing called recovery that changed my life. Many changes, much drama. Many disappointments, a lot of serenity has happened to me through my recovery. It was about 2 1/2 years ago that something happened to me, that brought me to my knees and I finally surrendered. Something that changed me forever. Someone I thought who I knew how to live life made a wrong decision and went to jail. This person I am sharing about is me. I was gone for two months, which felt like two years, and this was my first time at the age of 39. I felt so alone and the best thing I could do was the hardest thing I had to do. I had to admit that my life was unmanageable and face the fact that I am a criminal due to my using. The whole time I was locked up, so much happened to me. Something so indescribable filled my heart and soul. Today I know it was my Higher Power.

Today NA is my inspiration to live life on life's terms. Being in recovery has showed me that people such as myself make mistakes. Life goes on and this beautiful thing called Narcotics Anonymous has made me see life as something beautiful waiting for me. Just for today I don't have to be perfect. All I need is the desire to stop using.

Debbie A.

(Reprinted from "Got Recovery in Step" March 2002)



N.A. Readers Write

AND GOD SAID...NO

I asked God to take away my PRIDE, and God said "No".
 He said it was not for him to take away,
 but for me to give up.
 I asked God to make my handicapped child WHOLE,
 and God said "No".
 He said her spirit was whole, her body
 was only temporary.
 I asked God to grant me PATIENCE, and God said "No".
 He said patience is a by-product of tribulations,
 it isn't granted, it is earned.
 I asked God to give me HAPPINESS, and God said "No".
 He said He gives me blessings, happiness is up to me.
 I asked God to spare me PAIN, and God said "No".
 He said suffering draws you apart from worldly cares and
 brings you closer to Me.
 I asked God to make my SPIRIT grow,
 and God said "No".
 He said I must grow on my own,
 but He will prune me to make me fruitful.
 I asked for all things that I might enjoy LIFE,
 and God said "No".
 He said I will give you life, that you may enjoy all things.
 I asked God to help me LOVE others,
 as much as He loves me,
 And God said "Ah, finally you have the idea".

Anonymous

(Reprinted from "Straight Hope" April 1998)

"Sound Off"

QUESTION FOR NEXT MONTH

**How has working with a sponsor helped
 your recovery?**

How It Works

Utter confusion, Misery and Pain,
 Humiliation, Remorseful, Ashamed;
 Dreaded to face the light of each day;
 Not wanting to hear what people would say.
 Like where is your willpower, where is your pride;
 They don't understand that deep down inside
 I wish I knew the answer to give,
 And how to find the courage to live.
 I had taken the pills they told me I should;
 I tried all the cures but they did no good.
 I made many promises and meant them too,
 But the compulsion to use is stronger than you.
 One day a friend happened to say:
 "I know the answer, I can show you the way;
 All it takes is an open mind;
 Believe what you hear from your own kind."
 I went to a meeting. They read chapter 4,
 The steps made more sense. Hope was revived.
 I saw living proof of what faith can do.
 It worked for them; why not you?
 One day at a time they told me to live;
 They said, "ease does it and learn to forgive;
 Be humble, be honest and help when you can;
 Pass on what you learn to some other person."
 I heard them repeat the serenity prayer,
 And soon learned all my answers were there.
 Now, when someone asks, "can miracles be?"
 May I always reply, "take a look at me."

With NA Love,
 Joel S.

Chatt. Town Tn.

Submitted by Wildman Steve

(Reprinted from "Together We Can" March 1986)

*My Higher Power put me
 on earth to accomplish a
 certain number of things.
 Right now I am so far behind
 I will never die.*





WORD SEARCH

Everyone seems to like these so ...

articles
 contributions
 help
 publish
 shame
 guilt
 neglect
 Learning Day

service
 committment
 submit
 perseverance
 procrastinate
 poems
 sharing
 experience

strength
 hope
 newcomer
 oldtimer
 program
 faith
 growth
 In Step

(Reprinted from "In Step" May 1998)

**Have You Called
 An N.A. Member
 Today?**



Step Eight

[Excerpt from, "Basic Text"]

"We made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all."

The Eighth Step presents us with a problem. Many of us have difficulty admitting that we caused harm for others, because we thought we were victims of our addiction. Avoiding this rationalization is crucial to the Eighth Step. We must separate what was done to us from what we did to others.

Tradition Eight

[Excerpt from, "It Works How and Why"]

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

Tradition Eight reminds us that our members need no professional credentials to be effective in carrying the NA message. The heart of the NA way of recovery from addiction is one addict helping another. We have no certified NA counselors; our varied experiences in recovery from drug addiction are all the credentials we need.



EDITOR TO READERS:

RELEASE FORM

I hereby give the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship, *Together We Can*, their successors, assigns and those acting on their authority permission to publish the attached original article(s), poem(s), or other written material pertaining to my personal experiences with or opinions about the N.A. Fellowship or program, I understand that my material may be edited. I further understand that every effort will be made to assure my anonymity. I possess full legal capacity to exercise this authorization and hereby release *Together We Can* and the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship and its service boards and committees from any claim by myself, my successors and/or my assigns.

Signature (first and last name)

Date

Witness Signature (first and last name)

The following information is optional, and if supplied will be kept in complete confidence. It will help us to contact you if we have any questions about the material you submit.

Address

City, State and Zip Code

Telephone

Have You Called An N.A. Member Today?



WANTED!

DESCRIPTION: Art, poems, cartoons, short stories, articles, ideas, comments, anniversaries, gratitude lists, etc. by recovering addicts.

SALARY: If what you have to say touches even one addict, your reward will be immeasurable!

PS We at "Together We Can" must have a release form for any original Reader's Writes.

SEND YOUR INPUT TO:

TOGETHER WE CAN
217 N. Warwick Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21223
Fax: 410-362-8505
E-mail: barsc@verizon.net

