



MID AMERICA NEWSLETTER



Volume 33

PO Box 8723
Wichita, KS 67202
newsletter@marscna.net

Fall 2013

“When at the end of the road we find that we can no longer function as a human being, either with or without drugs, we face the same dilemma. What is there left to do? There seems to be this alternative: either go on as best we can to the bitter ends – jails, institutions or death – or find a new way to live. In years gone by, very few addicts ever had this last choice. Those who are addicted today are more fortunate. For the first time in man’s entire history, a simple way has been proving itself in the lives of many addicts. It is available to us all. This is a spiritual – not religious – program, known as Narcotics Anonymous.” Narcotics Anonymous; Basic Text, page 87.

CANCER OF A DIFFERENT KIND

Robin R. Williams

Written in loving memory for
Larry Williams

My husband, my best friend, my
soul mate! Larry committed
suicide July 13, 2012.

Drug Addiction is a cancer of
the soul. Like bone, lung, blood
breast or prostate cancer, it’s
hungry.

It needs to be fed; it will find a
way to survive. Drug Addiction
consumes the soul, like lung
cancer eats the lungs.

Meth/Drugs suck the life force,
your soul, out of you. Addiction
consumes till you or your soul is
dead.

THE HOPE

Like any cancer, there is always
"THE HOPE" for the miracle
cure. Although there is no cure
right now,

"THE HOPE" of total remission
remains. Remission can be
achieved with proper treatment,
the 12 step program.

THE FALL FROM GRACE.

The fall from grace hits hard and
has catastrophic effects. Even
though cancer appears gone, it's
lying dormant, hungry, waiting
for the opportunity to attack, to
feed, to kill. Addiction is no
different. Everyone says "you
have a choice". And like cancer,
it wears you down. It's very
strong and with each relapse,
you become weaker. Treatment
becomes more difficult. The

body gets tired of trying to survive the cancer. Addicts' soul's gets weak, tired of fighting, giving up the will to survive.

DON'T EVER GIVE UP. KEEP FIGHTING FOR SURVIVAL. KEEP THE HOPE.

My Name is Tandra

My name is Tandra and I'm an addict.

I would say that my story starts when I was around 4 or 5 years old. My Mom was an addict and would leave my sister and I alone in a trailer while she went 2 doors down to do whatever it was that she did. At that age I had no idea what she would do; I just know that I was alone with my sister who is a year younger than me. So I can say that I grew up early. I can remember hiding in the pantry among the pots and pans with my sister-starving. One of my first memories is of climbing out of the pantry, putting a pan on the stove, and scrambling some eggs, shells and all, but at least we had something to eat.

My Mom went through men much like she changed her clothes. As I grew up, none of this changed much, except our address. I cooked and cleaned for my Mom, sister, myself, and my brother when he was born; along with the countless men who came and went. Many of

those men molested both my sister and me.

Eventually we moved from Arizona to Missouri, where we lived with my Grandmother and Uncles. Life was what I would have called normal; only different and more people involved. From the ages of 7–13, I was molested by two of those three uncles. When I told my Mom what was going on, she told my Grandmother. Instead of bringing the two uncles in that were involved; she pulled my younger uncle in to apologize for something he hadn't even done.

When I was around 8, my Mom's boyfriend and one of my uncles put some marijuana in my Grandma's homemade spaghetti sauce. At dinner that night, my sister started to complain of a headache and, so I could just get away from the table, I said I had one too. In truth, I felt goofy and just wanted to play. Later I realized that I was high and liked it. I didn't know until I was older that it was Marijuana.

At the age of 14, I was running around with my friends smoking cigarettes and lying about what I was doing and where I was going. One time, three friends and I all told our parents that we were staying at each other's houses, when we were actually planning on running around with

older people. We didn't really know them, but it was cool because I was doing something that would piss my Mom off if she found out.

We drank, smoked cigarettes and flirted with the older guys in the group. We ended up at one of the guy's apartment and when we were all supposedly asleep, the guy I flirted with tricked me into going into the bathroom with him. He said he wanted to talk! I was scared, but was so stupid that I went with him. He raped me that night. When I left and went home, my "friends" said that I couldn't say anything. They said that they would beat me up if they got pulled into this and got into trouble because I opened my mouth. I couldn't leave my room all day and didn't know what to do. Another friend came over and asked me to go to church with her, so I went. I told the youth minister and his wife what happened and shit hit the fan. My Mom made a fool of herself, making everything about her and how she was molested by her brother's, "my uncles". So I was left in the dark again and felt so alone, more so than I had ever felt in my entire life.

I became promiscuous and hung out with "the bad crowd". One day a girl that I had just met told me about these two guys who she had met and asked if

she had a friend and if we wanted to hang out. It didn't turn out like either of us thought. They were complete gentlemen and took us to dinner and then invited us to go to church with them. She didn't want to, but I was one of those who went with the flow, so to speak. So I went.

It was two weeks before my 16th birthday when the guy that had taken me to church, had his parents talk to me. They went to my Mom who signed me over to them. I moved in with those wonderful people, where for the first time in my life I felt like I was living a dream and had finally found my home.

I had lived with them for two years, when I found out my Mom was coming to them and taking their money for me to continue living with them and going to church and the Christian school that they were also paying for me to attend. I didn't know what to do! My sister had come to see me around that time. We worked at the same place so we rented a trailer from the pastor of my church.

That is when I met, and married, my first husband. I was 18 and had just graduated High School. I moved in with him where he lived with his Mother for about a month. Then we got our own place. After I had my first child, he began abusing me,

beating me, calling me names, and he even raped me one night when I was trying to leave him.

After my third child was born, the oldest was attending early childhood preschool and the DFS came into the picture. At that point, I was way passed being depressed. I didn't clean or take care of my kids well, and to be honest, by this time I felt like "what is the use"? I was living out in the country in a shack with dirt floors, no phone, no TV.--just me, my three kids, and my husband. And, oh I forgot to tell you, we were living on his family's property. Their house was just on the other side of the trees!?!

DFS came and took my kids and then started telling me that they were acting out. When I asked how, they said sexually. As a result we had to take lie detector tests. Mine said that I was lying, as a result of childhood molestation and rape. This caused even more problems and I left my husband. I stayed at the Lafayette House for Domestic Abuse. I was served divorce papers a week later. As if all this wasn't enough, I found out that I was pregnant with my 4th child. He was taken from me in the hospital and I walked out the front doors by security, like a criminal. I ended up losing all of my children because of my past as a victim, and my ex-husband

who had the money to keep them away.

A year later, after going to therapy, I finally got up enough courage to go out with someone. I went right back into sleeping around and started drinking more. That is when I met my second man that beat me and treated me like I was nothing. That is also when I started using and got pregnant with my 5th child. My using started slowly and was few and far between, but man did I really like it!

I finally left that guy after I had my baby and went straight into another relationship. I started getting high daily and couldn't function without it. Even though I had my daughter with me, it made no difference! No matter how much I loved her, I really thought "what the hell does it matter?" I tried being sweet, innocent, truthful and doing everything how I thought was the right way, but it got me nowhere. So I figured I'd try this now. I had started stealing at a great level, and was good at it ...until I got caught! But that didn't stop me from anything. It only spurred me on. I got to the point that I was obsessed with getting high. I would wake up with something in my mouth and go to sleep with something in my mouth.

I was pregnant with my 6th child when I caught my husband

with my daughter. I was so mad and confused I didn't know what to say or do. I called his Mom and told her to come and get him, but that never happened. I couldn't look at him without feeling sick or wanting to kill him. But stupid me, I still stayed because he had money. Even if it wasn't much, just paycheck to paycheck, he could get the drugs I needed, so I stayed and used him for that purpose alone. I cheated on him, and the only way I could look at him was if I was messed up on a high-high level. When DFS came again, I kept a clean house and fed my girls. I spent a lot of time with them just so I wouldn't have to spend any with him.

DFS took my girls away from me and I was still with my 2nd husband because I thought I had a better chance of getting my girls back if I stayed with him. I was wrong! The judge made us take drug tests and said if we didn't have a clean UA then we wouldn't get my girls back. At that time I was already feeling like I didn't want this life for my girls or myself anymore, but I had no idea about NA. I didn't have the help I needed, I couldn't get clean. Then my husband burned my house down. That was the last straw! I saw it as a sign from my higher power that something needed to change. That was the last time I

saw him.

I went back to the Lafayette House on the Domestic Violence side and took classes from the Drug and Alcohol side and started staying clean. My clean date at that time was May 31st, 2009. I started going to NA in Joplin, MO. A couple of months later, I met someone who is also in NA and we started dating.

I started receiving visitations with my girls and I moved in with Doug. He has been my biggest rock at some of the most crucial times since we met. I'm sorry to say, that even though I stayed clean and did everything they asked me to do, and that was a lot, I still didn't get my girls back. It is one of the hardest things I have ever had to do. I had to tell my girls good bye and walk out the door. My youngest was standing in front of me saying, "I wanna go with you Momma" and the other one saying, "I hate you Momma". I had to walk out that day and try not to look back. I left and went home. About a month later, I broke up with Doug and relapsed. I used and then went straight back to the rooms and am proud to say that I've been there ever since.

Doug and I got back together and we are still together today. Staying clean and taking positions in our group and at Area helps a lot. It's hard at

times for me not to think about my kids and I still cry and wonder, "What if?", but I am doing good. I have a sponsor, I'm working my steps, and I'm getting married. I owe my life to NA!! If they hadn't been there when I relapsed, or I hadn't thought about them and come back, I don't know where I'd be now. I'm Secretary at my home group and Literature Chair for my Area. I'm starting to smile more and meet new people and come out of the dark that I had been in for so long.
THANK YOU NA FAMILY!!!

I'm A New Man

I'm feeling stronger every day,
I'm clean by my own way.
I can't forget where I come from,
or certain things that I run from.
I came to treatment full of
doubt, my inner child likes to
scream and shout.
I'm learning things no one can
teach me, with time and space,
she will not reach me.
I'm coping with losing love, and
putting effort in the Lord above.
I used to feel I was alone, with
friends and recovery, I have
built a home.
A place to share, a place to be
free, and a place I'm not scared
to be.
I think of her from time to time,
I'm using the pain to learn to
shine.
I show my true colors to those

that care, those who love me
will always be there.
Don't be sad, I'm doing fine, you
will see how sick you are in due
time.
I'm doing great and that you will
see,
I'm a new man, A man set free.
By Zack

Touch

It's 5:00 AM and I can't sleep,
I wish I had somewhere to go,
somewhere to be.
I can't wait to be out in the warm
spring breeze,
Walking with my baby, through
the tall oak trees.
I know I have to feel it, I know I
can't lie.
Sometimes when I think about
her, it makes me wanna cry.
Cry tears of sadness, cry tears of
joy,
I pray she's doing great and
recovering completely,
And when she's feeling demons
inside, she doesn't share
discretely.
I miss her so much. I miss her so
bad.
When I imagine the next time I
see her,
Breaking up will be
detrimentally sad.
I hope she can manage.
I hope I don't break her stride.
I don't mean to be an ass about
things,
It's how I feel inside.
As I sit and think, I stare at my

surroundings,
Thinking how building a life
without drugs will be
astounding.
I miss you sweetheart, I love
you very much.
I hope you feel the same, I crave
your touch.
By Zack

Life before NA

I am Eddie, a recovering
addict since 6 November 1981.

Narcotics Anonymous has
helped me stay clean due to
good sponsorship, and the
fellowship of the meetings, I
was able to stay clean in the
beginning by working the 12
Steps and 12 Traditions in my
life which was paramount.
Today, I sometimes think to
myself—why do I keep coming
to meetings? Why do I
selflessly work with other
addicts and their recovery?

That is when I stop and make
a gratitude list of the things that
my disease of addiction would
not let me have or keep. I find
strength in other addicts who
share or demonstrate their
actions in spite of their fears.
They trust in the spiritual
principals we have to practice by
taking their fourth and fifth step.
I know that to be of service to
the group and to other addicts, I
must remain clean and not
relapse. I must join together
with other recovering addicts in

a commitment to the greater
good of Narcotics Anonymous,
by doing so my own welfare is
enhanced beyond measure. The
words “It Works”, gives me new
hope in continuing my recovery.
Thanks to all the men and
women in the fellowship, who I
have met and to the new friends
that I have yet to meet in the
fellowship. I am looking
forward to meeting new friends
and I will see you at a meeting.
May your Higher Power Bless
You.

Eddie A.
Clean and Serene
Abilene



Artwork provided by Nate F.

From the Desk of the Editor

Hello Family, my name is
Robert and I am an addict. I am
trying to get this edition ready to
go to the printer so that the
Trusted Servants of your Areas
and Groups will be able to
distribute the MAN following
August's Region. I am
experiencing a bit of a quandary
about how to fill the pages with

stories of recovery: the experience, strength and hope that we all share with each other on a daily basis. First, I am going to tell you that I am writing this off the cuff just like as if I were in a meeting discussing some topic - unrehearsed, trusting my Higher Power to guide my thoughts and to inspire the words for the listener.

The quandary is simple, how to fill the pages, there are simply no submissions to help the still suffering addict both outside the rooms and inside the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous. I have learned while in the position of the Editor that only a very few addicts contribute 70% of the submissions and the other 30 percent is found from previous copies of the MAN. I also have learned that there are nine areas in the Region, which breaks down to between 70-72 groups. I wonder if just one person per Area was to make a submission and share their experience, strength and hope that the editorial staff would be overwhelmed with submissions. I have decades of time in this program but what about the newcomer? I speak a different language, than someone just walking through the door of NA. *“Our personal stories may vary in individual pattern but in the end we all have the same thing*

in common. This common illness or disorder is addiction. We know well the two things that make up true addiction: obsession and compulsion. Obsession – that fixed idea that takes us back time and time again to our particular drug, or some substitute, to recapture the ease and comfort we once knew. Compulsion – once having started the process with one fix, one pill, or one drink we cannot stop through our own power of will. Because of our physical sensitivity to drugs, we are completely in the grip of a destructive power greater than ourselves” from the Basic Text of Narcotics Anonymous, Page 87 of the Sixth Edition. What is my point? Can you **“the reader”** would be of service to other addicts? *Sharing with fellow addicts is a basic tool in our program. This help can only come from another addict. It is this help that says, ““I have had something like that happen to me, and I did this...””* For anyone who wants our way of life, we share experience, strength and hope instead of preaching and judging. *If sharing the experience of our pain helps just one person, it was worth the suffering. We strengthen our own recovery when we share it with others who ask for help. If we keep*

what we have to share, we lose it. Words mean nothing until we put them into action. Page 58 of the Basic Text, 6th Edition. Now you may be wondering how the Region elected this clown to be the Editor. I am not a creative writer when it comes to this life and death struggle that faces each addict daily. I am the class clown at social gatherings, camp outs, dances, but when it comes to the message of Narcotics Anonymous, I do not read between the lines, I read the black print and thank my Higher Power for those trusted servants who proceeded me in my recovery.

I would like to remind everyone that submissions can be turned in at any time. Submissions consisting of personal stories, lyrics that can be put to popular songs, poems, grayscale artwork are just a few of the staples of this publication. This is your publication and if you are like me, your sponsor may have uttered these words... You will only get out of your recovery what you are willing to put into your recovery. Submissions can be sent to the following email address-

newsletter@marscna.net



Living Day by Day

“Life by the mile is a trial; by the inch it is a cinch.” In the past, we got in to trouble when we thought we had to have our lives mapped out forever. That just did not work.

We need only deal with the problems and joys of today. If we try to see too far ahead, we lose touch with the reality of the here and now. Our Higher Power lets us know what we need to know when we need to know.

What seems impossible when looked at in total – writing a book, putting the children through college, abstaining for the rest of our lives – becoming manageable when worked at step by step, day by day.

So many of the things we worry about never happen. How much better it is to concentrate our energies on the real demands and challenges of today; insignificant as they may seem? When we turn our lives over to our Higher Power, we trust Him to manage the master plan and to direct us in the small details of living each day. Show me, HP, how to best live each day. I leave the years to Him. Submitted anonymously from the MAN printed 4/4/95.

I am an Addict. My name is Sherrie.

“I’ll kill those f***ing dogs!” That is the command that six drug enforcement agents screamed at me as they surrounded me. It was a cool day on September 26, 1996 when my children, significant other, and I were packing the car to leave the State of Kansas. As we were walking to the car, trying to pack only what we needed, six drug enforcement officers ran up on us from all directions. They surrounded us into a circle, leaving us to nowhere to run. As our dogs were barking at the cops, my babies were crying, and we were frantic. The cops walked closer to us with their guns cocked sideways at our dogs. I put my hands in the air and walked towards the cops to turn myself in.

I can remember all those feelings. I feel as if it happened yesterday. The shame, anger, hurt, scared, tired, but most of all I felt relief. No more worrying about getting caught, no more paranoia that everyone was a cop, no more lying, cheating and stealing, and no more chasing the high that I had grown to love so much,

The arrest was very embarrassing. I will never forget how they circled me, put me down on my knees, my

hands behind my back, they handcuffed me, and stood me up. As they were walking me towards the police car, the cops read me the charges, then my rights. My two boys, ages two and four, at the time were in complete strangers’ hands and put in a separate vehicle. I can still see their faces. I can still see the tears run down their scared little faces. I can still see their arms stretching out to me yelling “Mommy”. As they drove me to the police station I wondered if I’d see my little boys again.

It was a real rat race inside the police department. The detectives were walking around patting each other on their backs and congratulating each other. I hated them. I was real rebellious. I had been up for about seven days straight and was in no mood to deal with the procedure, pictures, and fingerprints.

Dressing out was not an easy task for them. I just wanted to eat and sleep, but they had other ideas in mind. Three detectives put me in a little room to question me. They said, “Sherrie, you have one chance, and only one chance to ever see your kids again.” They tried to trick me, and the thing that came to my mind was what my brother Randy said, “Sis, don’t tell on anyone.” So I basically told on myself. What I said in

that room could have put me in prison for 154 months, because of a previous possession of cocaine in 1989. I sat in jail for quite some time. My charges were manufacturing methamphetamines, possession of methamphetamines, possession with the intent to sell, no tax stamp, and endangerment of my children. I could handle the drug charges but the charge that hurt me the most was the endangerment of my children. I was embarrassed to place my children in the dangerous situation that they were in. Needless to say my bond was high, \$25,000.00 cash. I sat in jail. I didn't know anybody with that kind of money. The jail was overcrowded, ten people in a five man cell. I had been there awhile so I didn't have to sleep on the floor. There was no ventilation, therefore the stench and stagnation was terrible. I dreaded the girls that came in DWI in the middle of the night because in the morning the cell would reek of alcohol. I was physically sick in jail, de-toxing from drugs with only the help of other women who had been in my shoes.

After about 55 days in jail my court appointed lawyer got the judge to dismiss the charges because the state kept putting off my preliminary hearing. The

drug lab in Topeka were so backed up that they could not get the results back in ample time to satisfy the courts, so they let me go. I found out while I was in jail I had no friends and family. . In addition, my significant other of six years had walked out on me-too. The day we went to jail was pretty much the last time we spoke. He had the same charges as I did, and his lawyer told him to save his ass, and that is pretty much what he did. I cried every day for a year. I didn't understand why we couldn't get clean together and raise our children. But as time went by, I realized our relationship was based on drugs, lying, cheating, and stealing, and there is no way to salvage it.

When I got out of jail I had nowhere to go, no home, no children, no clothes, and no money. I walked down the street with shorts on, no shoes, on a ravaging cold November day. I was cold, angry, hurt, lost, and abandoned. I walked to a Narcotics Anonymous meeting; I opened the door, walked in, sat down, and talked to a group of people I didn't even know. They were understanding and friendly. I felt a warm sensation throughout my whole body as I opened my heart to them. All my fears were lifted, they told me everything was going to be all

right, they would help me, but first I had to help myself.

I went to treatment. At treatment I met other individuals just like me, their stories are a little different, but we all share the same pain and guilt. We all suffer from the disease of addiction. There I learned that I was not unique, and there I found out there was hope for me. I am very active in my recovery. I am now a “part of”. I have a new family, one that likes me for me. There is life after drugs. November 14, 1999 will be three year since I took my last drink, inhaled, injected, and ingested any illegal drugs into my body. I put my recovery as the first priority in my life, because I know if I pick up my old life I would fall apart. Today I live life on life’s terms. I practice the Twelve Steps in all my affairs. I have a real job, it doesn’t pay much but it is legal. I am a good mother. I help newcomers who walk in the door scared like I was with their recovery. I give them hope and love. I listen to their fears and offer them suggestions on what worked for me. I am an addict. My name is Sherrie. I suffer from a disease which has no known cure, it can however be arrested at some point and recovery is then possible. Submitted in the MAN, Issue 9, December 1999.

Free

I sit here without conviction,
searching for inner peace,
Honestly feeling the
repercussions of this messed up
disease.

I'm searching for the answers;
I look high and low,
With God's help and
perseverance, I'll make it to the
next show.

I know that I'm sick; I know
that I'm not well.
On all my character defects, I
must not sit and dwell.

I'm learning these tools, and
ways to cope.
People that truly love me will
never lose hope.

I gave up on myself a very
long time ago,
I felt like a loser that would not
make the next show.

I've been honest with myself,
and those that surround me.
This means I've exposed my
demons; they now cease to
hound me.

I talk with my Mother, I know
she loves me.
I'm in touch with my Higher
Power; I know He's above me.

As I look back on my past, I
know that I can be free.
Free from my disease. Free at
last!

By Zack