



MID AMERICA NEWSLETTER



Volume 32

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Summer 2013

"We feel that our approach to the disease of addiction is completely realistic for the therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel."

Page 18, 6th edition, Basic Text

Denene Story

I didn't think I would ever get to the point of being clean. I am and have been now for 5 years. When I came back to NA after being gone for 13 years, I decided to put everything I had into this thing that I had always wanted. I just didn't know how to go about getting it or doing it. This time I listened with an open mind and heart. It had been closed for such a long time. Because I didn't think a bunch of drug addicts could tell me how to live my life better than I did. HA! How humbling!! I started going back to meetings and thinking how do I get what all these other people had? Maybe they DO know how to help me? Maybe my HP/ God does love me? I was also worried about who might still be here from way back when. But, something inside of me and my gut said NO MATTER WHAT I was going to do this come hell or high water.

I eventually got a sponsor who did her part very well for the time she was to be there. I then had to go on my own for a while after she moved away to leave the program. I asked a few more women to sponsor me and I finally found one 60 miles away that has so far worked out. She doesn't call but does listen when I call her. She allows me to do what I need to do for me and if it was wrong she tells me her thoughts about it.

I have experienced so much STUFF from the past that today all the things I feel and think about are gifts, blessings, spiritual awakenings.

I would not trade today for anything back there. NO MATTER WHAT this thing called recovery is the best and only way for this addict to walk through.

I am learning to appreciate people for who they are and where they are just as they are.

No changes necessary at least by me. (as if I could anyway).

I have gone through the steps and I am going through them again. It is called a process. Trials and tribulations are life on life's terms and it is the only way to discover what life has to offer. I may not look like I have much experience but I do. Looks can be deceiving by some addicts. I have what I have for my life. I have a lot of strength and hope to share too. I get insecure and scared of people like people do. I think crazy sometimes hateful things like people do. But then my HP/God tells me I am ok with Him and in my recovery because NO MATTER WHAT I am doing this thing to the best of my ability with humility, respect, and dignity. These are things I didn't have in the past or want for myself or from you. I had to learn how to get those for myself and give those to you because of that learning process. I am grateful to be a recovering addict and don't have the desire to go back to what I came out of. DEC 10.9.07

TkMyWll

Incorporating the 11th Step

Some of us have come into the Program broken, and hung around for a while, only to find God or salvation in one kind of religious cult or another. It is

easy to float back out the door on a cloud of religious zeal and forget we are addicts with an incurable disease.

(Step 11 Basic Text NA, pg. 47 6th Edition).

I recently have come across many things that have just struck me, well, challenging. Not because I am stuck with a decision, but because I see this happening in my home group and I don't know if I agree with what is happening; I feel as if people are pushing their great experiences off on other people and it is taking away from what our program gives us and teaches us. I also think to each their own and it really isn't any of my f*&%ing business, I just know what Na has given me and I have seen time and time again what religious zeal has done, and I hope that these individuals do not follow the same path of floating in an out because of it.

I know about God, "but addiction 'IS' such a cunning enemy of life I had lost the power to do anything about it"...{Why? Basic Text}...Slowly my defects and obsessive mind starts to think that "Maybe if I drink a little wine I'll be okay. Or maybe some beer, as long as I don't smoke crack I'm okay"...I'm an addict. I need to abstain from ALL drugs in order to recover...INCLUDING

ALCOHOL...Before I knew it I'll be buying crack, stuck in a closet to try to calm down my defects... "I sought help through religion and psychiatry and none of these methods were sufficient" ...It doesn't say that their not good... it says they are not sufficient...Is this fellowship the ONLY way to get clean. NO...But it is for me. I've seen people utilize many ways and it works for them. This is a Spiritual Program. I believe in The 12 Steps. This program has done for me what I could not do for myself. Which is to stay clean one day at a time. We use Step 11 to..."Improve and maintain our Spiritual condition."(Basic Text Step 11)...That's what it's all about. At least for me. Learning to live a Spiritual way of life for me means so much. However; I will never be perfect....That 5th Step assures me of that... "Praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the Power to carry that out"..... That says it all. I can't add anything to that other than search and you will find what works for you. I have a little system of praying and meditating that works for me. When I don't practice Step 11 my resentments come back....My defects come back and if I'm not careful that desire to use may too.

Just my take on it all and I did have a little help, thank you. ☺
Chrissylea

I'm Loving It!

In my life I've watched family and friends battle addiction and I was and still am one of the worst. I started using when I was 15 and by the time I turned 19, I found myself selling dope, on the run from my probation, constantly looking over my shoulder wondering when they would find me. Well, they did catch me and I lucked out enough not to get caught with drugs on me. They threw me right back on probation; back out on the streets, back to the drug game. By the Grace of God (of my understanding), my probation officer found me a bed for treatment in Topeka, reluctantly at first. The staff at the treatment center opened my eyes and my heart to the program. I remember my first NA meeting I attended there, the man chairing the meeting who I will refer to as Bob was so enthusiastic about the program and every word he spoke was like gold to me! I got out, came home and attended as many meetings as I could. I got a job, lost the job but I kept coming back. I am still clean today and I will tell you that my worst day clean beats my best day high.

Through this program I have learned that I really do have self-worth. I am still scared to this day because I never want to fall back into that lifestyle. I am so grateful to all of my fellow addicts in this program for everything they have done for me. I will have 6 months clean this week, without NA, I would have never come this far. Keep Coming Back.....



Brooke H.
Omega-Crossroads
Unity Area

**One's too many
("Sixteen Tons")**

Some people say a leopard just can't change his spots
An addict's gonna use 'cause it's all that he's got
But I've heard tell there's a better way
And I'm gonna try it just for today

One's too many and a thousand not enough
If I pick up life's a-gonna get tough
I know my disease has a

powerful voice
It's up to me every day to make a good choice

I was born into a world that's heartless and cold
I started using drugs just to make myself whole
And a cruel, hard lesson that I was to learn
Is life don't offer no negotiable terms

One's too many and a thousand not enough
If I go to the dope man it's gonna be rough
But I can't stay clean if alone I stand
It's like wrestlin' a gator with only one hand

I didn't become an addict in a single day
My best thinkin' what made me this way
I was raised by my daddy to be honest and clean
But drugs and self-will made me heartless and mean

One's too many and a thousand not enough
I've tried doctors, religion and all o' that stuff
But when I need to reach out for help from someone
That little bitty phone weighs sixteen tons

Now I'm gonna give N.A. a try

Or I'll be using till the day that I die
They tell me I can lose the desire to use
And find a better life 'stead of singin' the blues

One's too many and a thousand not enough
But these twelve steps are some powerful stuff
The poet sang how it's been a long, strange trip
And I o-o-o-owe my life to this fellowship

Ed B., Lawrence

Tired of Meetings

You say you're tired of going to meetings
it's not payin' off stayin' clean
This time it's gonna be different not the way its always been
Active addiction's a losin' crapshoot
'cause when you go back out again
You get one roll and you bet your soul
and you win if you roll
Thirteen....

I'm Grateful for Meetings....

I need small meetings. If there are too many addicts at the meeting, I feel I'm lost in the crowd. A small meeting means everyone will have a chance to share and since I'm new in recovery, I need to hear

everyone's experience, strength and hope... especially hope. Also, I know I'll get to share, and if I'm struggling with something, I can bring it up and get others' take on my problem. Making friends and getting close to people has always been difficult for me, and with a small group I can get to know the people easier. It's likely that some of the others will be going for coffee after the meeting and if the meeting is small, there's a better chance they'll ask me to go. They go for coffee after the big meetings, too, but I'm not very outgoing and there's no way I'll have the nerve to "invite myself". Small meetings are just better for me. There's a small group in my town; I'm going to ask them if I can be a home group member. Thank God for small meetings.

I went to a really big meeting the other night... it was great! There were a few long-timers there, and it was so good to hear them share. Several people were there when I arrived, I guess they came early to help set up. When I got there, I was welcomed and given a hug by a lot of people. The topic was an issue I've been dealing with, out of the Daily Meditation. I didn't share, I didn't have to! There were so many different kinds of addicts there, someone or other asked

every question I would have, and others offered different views of the topic. I heard several addicts share, and I realized they were “telling my story” A couple of them shared in ways that I hadn't ever thought about. There's two addicts I hope I see at meetings soon... I'm sure either one would make a great sponsor. At the end of the meeting, after we circled and said the closing meditation, someone asked “...who wants to go get a cup of coffee and a Danish?” The person who sat next to me turned right to me and said “I'm going, you want to go, too?” I really enjoyed that meeting! Thank God for BIG meetings!

There's a meeting in a town near where I live that's a little different. It's a “Step Study” meeting. I haven't started working the steps yet, I don't even have a sponsor, but another addict said some people were “road tripping” over there for the Step Study and asked if I wanted to go. Wow, that was really nice... “road tripping” used to mean... oh, never mind. When we got to the meeting, they asked if there were any newcomers, and I raised my hand. They asked if I would like to study Step One!! Of course I did! Wow, Thank God for Step Study meetings!

One of the long-timers I had seen at a few meetings was the speaker at a “Speaker Meeting” a couple days ago. I didn't know what a “Speaker Meeting” was, but I saw it on the Meeting Schedule I got at my first meeting, and I thought it might be interesting to check out. I don't have a car, and it was too far away to walk, though. On the meeting list, several addicts had written down their telephone numbers. I didn't think I'd have the courage to actually call, but I really wanted to go to the Speaker Meeting, so I called. I actually called three numbers, the first two I got message machines... I was too scared to leave a message, though. The third person was home, and offered to give me a ride. We had a nice talk on the way over, and the other two addicts I'd tried to call both called me! Guess they have “Caller I.D.”.... The Speaker Meeting was very good, and (though I hate the word) the speaker was AWESOME!! We were talking after the meeting, and I was dancing around the question when the speaker asked “Do you need a sponsor?” Though the road we have traveled is not really the same, I now have a sponsor!! Thank God for Speaker Meetings!!
A Grateful Addict in Kansas

Of or In

Our Basic Text says, “Goodwill is best exemplified in service; proper service is “Doing the right thing for the right reason.”” I heard, again, recently an analogy in relation to Our Symbol. It is compared to building a pyramid. When building the walls of a pyramid, you can only build so high without needing the other walls for support. Our Program of recovery works the same way. I cannot leave out on any area, Self, God, Society or Service. If I put all my focus on one area it is not enough to support my recovery or the fellowship as a whole. With balance, and an equal amount of focus on each area, my base broadens, my recovery grows and the point of freedom is extended for me and for others. This brings me to the topic of Service. It is an ongoing problem of less addicts not giving back, to the fellowship that has given them freedom from active addiction. Our Basic Text says, “The purpose of our fellowship is to make recovery available to all.” For this addict, service is a necessity for my continuous growth in recovery. It is as necessary as food and water. Yet, service can be done wrong. What? The first statement I quoted brings a question of motive. Am I ‘in service’ or am I ‘of service’?

Both statements at first glance appear to be the same. When I am ‘in service, I am probably acting to coax my ego, or even worse I share a negative view on the opportunity. “I have to go to area tomorrow.” “Those people” When I set these words into play it breeds an atmosphere that is not conducive to growth of our fellowship. Now, when I am ‘of service’, I have changed over to a continuous state of mind and heart. This state allows for compassion and love. This ‘being of’ allows me, and us, to achieve “Goodwill” as described above. This position gives me a feeling of being continuous with service. When I am ‘of service’, it is constant and provides endless opportunity for me to grow personally. Service is an expression of gratitude. For me I choose to be a part of instead of apart from. This allows me to give back to the fellowship that has given me every ounce of every gift that I have today. For what I have received, I will be eternally grateful. My debt continues to grow and can never be paid in full. Thanks NA and my predecessors who taught me how to be ‘of service’.

Daniel C.

*Mid-America Regional Campout
Clinton Lake
July 3-7, 2013*

Plains States Zonal Forum

As seen by a newcomer to Zonal
(Your Regional Co-Chair)
Friday, February 8th, 2013

Does your Higher Power ever put you right where you need to be? Mine sure the heck does and that's where I found myself this past weekend during my initial experience with a Zonal Forum. A group of us arrived at around 6:30 p.m. just in time to have dinner. Following dinner and for the rest of the night I found myself fighting back tears of gratitude. The speaker for the night spoke directly to me with the realization that I need to be practicing Recovery based Service and work at staying clear of Service based Recovery. He also caught my attention when he discussed his dislike of the clean-time count-down; he feels that we alienate the newcomer by having them sit the longest. I got to thinking would it such a bad idea to have a clean-time count-up with a hug line for the newcomer (the newcomers stand first and are welcomed (hugged) by every addict in the room as they stand for their clean time), yes it would take a little longer than normal? I have to ask, where is your gratitude for the program that saved you?

After the speaker and some fellowshipping around the

coffee pot I made my way to the campfire meeting where the enlightenment continued. The general topic was Service Work, I can't share the specifics but by being there it helped reenergize my commitment to my own Recovery and the service positions I'm currently involved with. There was truly an awesome group of what I will call "The Winners" in which my Higher Power led me too to be a part of. So just in attending for the evening I can only hope to take this experience and remember it so I don't lose the focus I gained.

Saturday, February 9th, 2013

I awoke this morning continuing with the overwhelming feeling of gratitude, knowing that I am right where my Higher Power wants me to be. Then I read the entire daily meditation, which I rarely ever do, and it reminded me of how I used to feel and how I rarely feel that way today. Even just by coming to Zonal and getting out of my comfort zone I can still catch myself feeling a part from, but what the program is teaching me about keeping an open mind and listening for the similarities I can quickly become a part of.

I was outside smoking and was listening to a couple addicts talk about sponsorship

and what it is to them, and again I found myself becoming reenergized for this program. I am not yet blessed with a sponsoree who wants to live this program, but by listening to these addicts share the love, hope and general concern they have towards another addict I have hope that I will be given the opportunity of witnessing a miracle in the closeness that they share. I must remain patient and wait for my Higher Powers Will to work in my life.

On with the learning, I attended the first workshop offered that morning which was on “Group Conscience.” While sitting through this workshop there were several topic/questions that caught my attention for both my personal Service Work and some I feel any Service Body should be considering. They are as follows:

- True Spiritual Principles are never in conflict.
- Is it a true Group Conscience when only 5% of a group participates in a group business meeting?
- Or is it that 95% of the group delegated the 5% involved at the group business meeting?
- Has there ever been a Group/Area/Region

etiquette workshop/discussion/meeting? If so, how often are they held?

- When discussing an issue, is the reason for being against being explained so all members can make a well informed decision? Or is it left unexplored?
- “It’s better not to be done than to be done with someone’s’ name behind it”
- If a committee begins holding people more accountable in their Service Work, people will begin holding themselves more accountable with their Service Work and their own personal lives. That’s why we are here, to learn a new way of life.

The next workshop I attended was the “Service System Project Review/Updates”; there was a lot of information discussed and I discovered exactly how uninformed I am about this topic. So to avoid causing any confusion I’m not going to give a report on something I myself don’t understand, YET. Just know that there is a ton of information for review and when you keep an open-mind it

seems excitingly-scary (which most change is). Information is available at www.na.org/servicesystem or you can email any questions you may have to servicesystem@na.org. Or if you fumble through the internet like I do, the steps to take are as follows: Go to www.na.org then select "For Our Members" tab and scroll down to the "Projects & Surveys" link and finally select the "Service System Project." So if you would like to know what is happening with our Service Structure or are terrified of change then you need to check this out.

We broke for lunch and the fellowshiping I witnessed and participated in was simply amazing, I guess you just had to be there, sorry. The next workshop I attended was "Navigating NA.org." Our own Daniel C. presented the workshop and I feel the easiest way to learn is hands on, so I'm not going to go into any of this. If you have any questions I'm sure that several can find or know the answer.

The final workshop of the day was Supporting Our Vision", we listened to Jimmy K's vision and then discussed ways to support it. How we need to be more transparent with the reporting of information throughout our Service

Structure. Letting the group know when there are successes in service, such as unanimously voting in the Living Clean book the first time it is presented. We also discussed everyone's favorite topic of Self Support and how it involves more than just putting money in the basket, and how can we draw attraction to Service Work. Many people said that they got involved when an old-timer or sponsor drug them along for the ride and kept dragging them. That was how I got involved and it has kept me coming back.

Sunday was the actual Zonal meeting and I had a hard time following along so I am hoping that Daniel can fill you all in with those activities. So this wraps up my experience with my first Zonal and I hope it didn't bore you too terribly. I had an awesome time and will try and make them in the future.

In Loving Service,
Aaron B.

Addicted to Drugs?
Narcotics Anonymous,
Can Save us Today!
Narcissus is the God of Self
Love.

It is also a drug,
that into our veins we will
shove.
He will tell you his lies,
you'll be his believer.

He will make you go crazy,
he's a cunning deceiver.
He will take your children,
he'll take your wife,
He will take your husband,
he'll ruin your life!
He won't let you go,
no matter how hard you try.
He'll break your heart;
he will make you cry.
But there is hope for you
there's a better way.
There are people who can help
you....

The Fellowship of N.A. !!
To save your own life;
Narcotics Anonymous
It's Just For Today!
Doug H.
2/6/2013

**Reprinted from MAN Issue
#3; June – August of 1992
Continued from previous
edition.**

Tradition Seven: Every NA
group ought to be fully self-
supporting, declining outside
contributions.

1. Honestly now, do I do all I
can to help NA remain self –
supporting? Could I put two
dollars in the basket instead of
one?
2. Should I put a little more in
the basket for the newcomer
who can't afford it yet?
3. Should NA have car washes
or garage sales to raise funds for
NA?

4. Is a group Treasurers report
unimportant business? How
does the Treasurer feel about it?
5. Does my group keep
substantial funds in its account
or do we forward the extra
money to the Area,
Region or W.S.O.?

Tradition Eight: Narcotics
Anonymous should remain
forever non-professional, but
our service centers may employ
special workers

1. Do I sometimes try to or
expect to receive some reward
even if not money for my
service work?
2. Do I sometimes try to sound
like an expert on addiction, on
recovery, on NA itself, on
Psychology, on Spirituality, or
heaven help me, on humility?
3. In my own NA recovery have
I had any experiences which
illustrate the wisdom of this
tradition?

Tradition Nine: NA as such
ought never be organized but we
may create service boards or
committees directly responsible
to those they serve.

1. Do I still try to run things in
NA?
2. Do I exercise patience and
humility in any NA job I take?
3. Am I aware of all those to
whom I am responsible in any
NA service position?
4. Have I learned to step out of
a service position gracefully and

profit thereby when the time comes?

5. What has rotation to do with anonymity? With humility?

Tradition Ten: NA has no opinion on outside issues: hence the NA name ought never to be drawn into public controversy.

1. Do I give the impression that there really is an NA opinion on the war on drugs on doctors, psychiatrists, churches, treatment facilities, government?
2. Can I honestly share my own NA experience without giving the impression I am stating the NA opinion?
3. What would NA be without this tradition?

Tradition Eleven: Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion: we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and film.

1. Do I sometimes promote NA so fanatically that I make it seem unattractive?
2. Am I careful about throwing NA names around even within the fellowship?
3. Am I ashamed of being an addict?
4. Am I always careful to keep the confidences shared with me as an NA member?
5. Is my NA recovery attractive enough that a practicing addict would want such a quality for themselves?

Tradition Twelve: Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principals before personalities.

1. Why is it a good idea to place the common welfare of all members of NA before individual welfare? What would happen to me if NA as a whole disappeared?
2. When I don't trust a current servant, do I wish I had the power to straighten them out?
3. Do I try and get my group to conform to my standards, not its own?
4. What is the real importance of me among the thousands of recovering addicts?
5. I do all I can do to support NA financially? When was the last time I gave away a Newsletter subscription to a newcomer?
“Anonymously submitted from a few anonymous sources” and edited for length.

Editor's Note:

I would like to thank everyone who has submitted their stories to the MAN. Please use this newsletter as part of your PI and H&I efforts.

Special thanks goes out to my co-editor-Kathy F.

***MARSCNA Regional Meeting
18-19 May 2013***