Recovery
Revolution

Stories of Hope and Recovery From Behind the Walls at Oregon State Penitentiary

Provided by the Seeking Traditional Solutions Group of the Greater San Jose Area of Narcotics Anonymous

A Compilation From Over Ten Years of The Hole in the Wall Group Newsletter
“The Only Requirement for Membership is the Desire to Stop Using”
RECOVERY
REVOLUTION

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Recovery Revolution
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The Hole in the Wall Group

158 NA Meetings each year at Oregon State Penitentiary.

Every Tuesday: our 1-4 Class welcome the newcomer in a more personal setting than the larger general meetings.

The second and fourth Wednesdays of each month our twelve step book study group meets, working the twelve steps through the twelve months of each year.

The first and fifth Thursdays of the month our membership group meets to hold a general NA meeting.

Every Friday our sponsorship Group meets to prepare responsible members for their role as NA sponsors.

The first, third and fifth Saturdays our general open door NA meetings are held with refreshments and outside guests.
Facsimile of the current Hole in the Wall Group Newsletter Cover
The Hole in the Wall Club
Oregon State Penitentiary
2014
Reflections

My name is Shawn and I’m a recovering addict. I’m a member of the Hole In The Wall Group at the Oregon State Penitentiary. I’m writing to share with you my experience, strength and hope as it relates to what it was like, what happened and what it’s like now.

I started my life of using and misery at age five or six with my older brother and the weed dealer who lived in our camper in the backyard. Since age 11, I’ve been raised in boy's homes and cages as addiction took its natural progression from weed right on up to the extremes. I can’t remember really having fun or finding enjoyment in being high, it was just an escape, a numbing of the reality that was my life, anything to change the feelings or shut them off, even for just a few miserable hours. But no matter how fast or far I ran I couldn’t get away from me! Because no matter where I went there I was. Today I’ve chosen to live my life clean facing my problems and feelings head on, and what a relief that has turned out to be. I know God didn’t design me to be high and disengaged from this life. It’s important to me that I grow and be all I was intended to be, all that I can. My full potential can never be realized being high. It's time we all make a stand for our loved ones and ourselves and grow beyond desperate, selfish, hopeless addiction. I’m always here and ready to help anyone of you and support you in your choice to remain clean.

Shawn F.
OSP
Grateful

Desiring to live free from my addiction has had a tremendous impact in reuniting me with my past loved ones while here at O.S.P.

I am grateful to the supportive brothers in the Hole In The Wall Group and each meeting means a lot to me. What I hear in the meetings is great because I can then take it home with me and my plans to use these tools when I release grows with each meeting.

I sit and think of ways to explain what I’ve learned to others by living free from addiction and in doing so I have been able to start rebuilding my connection with my family. When I shared what was in my heart with my family the outcome was great. It was like having a genie lamp dropped in my lap so I rubbed it and low and behold I was asked by my family “What do you want from us?” I was blown away by the question and I replied that my only wish would be not forget but to forgive me. They replied, “Consider it done.” What a wonderful gift to receive from just being honest.

The benefits for me in recovery have been great and I hope that this will encourage someone to give it a shot. I thank Narcotics Anonymous and The Hole In The Wall Group for showing me how to live clean.

God Bless,
Travis B.
"THINK"

Life over death

Program over Poison
Or
Addiction and Abuse

Respect and Responsibility
Or
Institutions and Insanity

Friends in Fellowship
Or
Separation from sobriety
And
Rejection from relapse

Honesty by helplessness
Occasionally produces
Courage to change
But
Faith precedes Forgiveness

(Anonymous)
Living But Dying

Silver spoons
And neon moons
Bought with drugs
From the money I make
To the money it takes
All of it is never enough.

One more hit
One more day
The cycle never ends
Sooner or later
With all that money
I turn on my family and friends!

One point seven to three point five
Straight into my blood
A recipe for destruction
Guaranteed to cause a flood.

All flooded out
And nowhere to go
I wound up in prison
With nothing to show!

When I feel the poison
Enter my vein
I’m like a soldier at war
Being brutally slain

Nothing I can do
Except lay there and die
My life is a war as long as I’m high!

Tim H. OSP
Recovery

There comes a time in every life,
   To reflect on where we’ve been
To separate the good from the bad
   And answer for our sins.

   For many it’s daunting task
They rather would ignore
   They’d rather turn the other cheek
      Than even up the score.

But for those of us who deal
   With addiction every day
We just don’t have the luxury
   To hope it goes away.

We have to make the effort
   In everything we do
So we make a plan
   To make it up
And then we follow through.

   We forge our path
Step by step
   A little further everyday
And with a little luck and a lot of help
   We find another way.

Kurt M   OSP Alumni
Recovery Rocks

I spent about 40 years of my life in my addiction, many of those years were spent behind bars, OSP, OSCI, SCI, CRCI, and of course, County Jails. I never tried recovery because I viewed it as a place for quitters, rats and punks. I got clean when I went back to jail on November 29th, 2001 and I haven’t been high since.

Today I look back on all those years that I spent in my addiction and wonder what it would have been like, and where I would be today, if I would have found the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous sooner in life.

Well... I didn’t, so why worry about things I can’t change. Instead, I use my past experiences to strengthen my recovery. If I can change, or save, the life of just one suffering addict by sharing my experiences, strengths and hopes, then I have regained what I myself lost. Thanks to my dear friend, and at the time, cellie, I found my way to the rooms of N.A., and there I found a new way of life, the only requirement being “the desire to stop using”.

I’ve been out of prison for almost 6 months and on the 4th of April I started college at PCC. Today my life is happy, I’m happy and I love the feeling of not being wanted by the law. N.A., the 12 steps, and the 12 traditions, have opened the door to a loving relationship to my Higher Power whom I call God. N.A. has shown me a new way of life; it has given me my life back. One addict helping another...that’s what we do!!!

Thankful Recovering Addict,
John Jay G. OSP Alumni
Dear Lord

Hi it's me, I've messed up again
Have mercy on my soul
My life has become unmanageable
And I have no more control.

I've been selfish in my ways
While I risk the lives I love
I know you feel my tears
As I cry to you above.

I'm asking you to bless my soul
Cause I can't let this get worse
There's no more room for me to run
And I feel that I am cursed.

Please help me change my life
And rid me of this hate
There's so much evil in my way's
I hope its not to late.

I'm begging you to hear my words
And listen to what I say
Cause I know I'll never stumble
When on my knees to pray.

JoJo     OSP
But That’s Just Me

I find myself bombarded with outside stimuli. Laughter, sadness, joy but you know what I’m experiencing, right?

I’ve made a choice to accomplish growth during my stay here at OSP. Of course I didn’t enter these walls with a whole lot of encouragement except that the last memory I have before 3 hots and a cot was lying in my sleeping bag, looking up at the underside of a concrete over-pass here in Salem.

I found my bottom at 41 years old. I didn’t care whether I was a statistic of a homeless vagrant being robbed, or whether my life ended. I hoped to be arrested. For me, it was time to put the addict to sleep, by whatever means.

The program of Narcotics Anonymous has given me the physical support group, I so desperately need. The twelve steps have given me the tools I need to stay clean each and every day. There is a Higher Power here that, for some reason has seen fit to equip me with a new way of life.

Today, I have a burning desire to succeed at living clean and sober. No longer am I numb inside or out. For you that honestly search inside yourself will understand, and for the newcomer, just hang out, don’t leave before the miracle happens.

Believe me I was a devout hopeless dope fiend-I am now a dopeless hope fiend. It feels good to be alive. It feels good to see others that want a new way of life. I just have a few more thoughts and I’ll go... I hope that those of you that want that refreshing renewal of your being, you will give our meetings a try. After all, you know how to live on the dark side... “Just for today...I will have faith in a new way of life”

Grateful,
Regi R. OSP
Working Toward Success

This first month out has been a whirlwind of activity. I started working the week I got out by roofing our house over in Madras and we have stayed steady ever since. Right now we are re-grouting the outside of a 100+year old brick building in Albany that used to be Whorehouse back in the day. The work is hard but I love it.

Life in recovery couldn’t be better. Two days after getting out I had an appointment with Vocational rehabilitation and they determined I was eligible for services. So as a result of that I went to the dentist yesterday and started the process of getting my teeth fixed. One thing that has helped me make a smooth and successful transition is the fact that I started doing the footwork when I was still incarcerated by writing letters and addressing the issues I was going to face when I got out (employment, health care, etc).

As a result of what I was doing for my recovery in prison and showing initiative for making changes in my life my P.O. has been great. She has basically put herself in a position of support as long as I continue to work my recovery program and maintain my responsibilities. So, as it stands I only have to see her once a month and she is not requiring any kind of drug/alcohol treatment besides N.A., which I would do anyway.

When I released, my parole was set for three years but when I met with her she informed me I have a scheduled date in one year to be placed on inactive parole so as long as I don’t break any laws I won’t have to have any contact with her (kind of like bench probation). I thought that was pretty fair. So if I continue to work my recovery program and just do “the next right thing”. I will only have to see her eleven more times.

I guess my point is that the changes I made in my lifestyle, behavior and attitude while I was incarcerated has had a tremendous impact on my
quality of life and my relationship with my P.O. since I got out. If I have any advice to the guys getting out soon it would be to attend the pre-release class offered by D.O.C., continue to participate in recovery and make as many contacts as possible on the outside before they leave prison so it’s not overwhelming when they get out.

On another note I have not forgot about finding outside support for you guys but it is a slower process than I anticipated, mainly because of my work schedule. I have been attending meetings with my sponsor because he will pick me and bring me home, never fear though, as you guys are always on my mind and in my prayers and I will continue to be of service to the best of my ability. If you have anything specific that I can help with let me know. Please tell the rest of the “Hole In The Wall Group” I send my best.

Sincerely,
Kurt M.

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From Death Row

Hello and greetings. I just wanted to write to you to thank you for having the time to help some people that can’t help themselves. I recently spent 14 days in DSU. Most people when they see me say very disrespectful things.

It has been only 10 years since the last time I used. Through N.A. I have found something to help me. Through N.A. and some of its principles, I find new ways to deal with life here at OSP on death row.

I am an addict, and like many addicts that don’t stay in the program, I find a way to use. Every now and then, I’ll write in hopes that “The Hole In The Wall Group” will print my submission. Hopefully any one that thinks about “getting away with using” can learn from my experience that in fact life can get worse if they decide to use.

Thank you N.A. and any newcomers keep coming back!

Take good care,
Conan H. OSP
Till Death Do Us Part

Addiction for me is cunning, baffling and most of all deceiving! I've heard it said, "If you do dope you are married for life." It wasn't surprising that in the end, my witch of a mistress controlled me and my life was hers. There was no room for anything or anyone other than the one with the seductive voice whispering in my head, "it's ok, it's alright, you don't need nothing you've got me." I was possessed, controlled ruthlessly, and dominated, totally. I was never free from the constant anguish of my shortcomings, inadequacies and fear.

We thought we were a powerful pair only to find my mind, body and spirit in disrepair. A broken man still listening to that warm soft comforting silky voice of illogic with my tail firmly planted in ruin. Hopeless to the point of pure apathy with no road back, reveling in abandonment and forsaken through self-deception; I was in a living hell and still I listened. The voice saying "this is the promised paradise of ultimate bliss."

Yet, I was disillusioned and knew it was just a sick fantasy of a fiend. I was powerless over my situation. I knew it was hopeless and chose to go on the best I could, leaving my fate in my cruel mistress's hand.

This she-devil claimed to be the only one who was there for me and could take any pain away at will. I listened and lived the lie knowing I would never get my fill. The hole inside grew till I was just a shell of the person I once was. A boy with a future bright as a star, only to realize I hadn't gone far.

When the facade that was my life came crashing down and I was arrested. My mistress was nowhere to be found. Some sense and clarity came to my thinking and I realized my death was imminent if I didn't divorce myself from this devastating dominatrix dope.

When I came to prison I watched some guys leave the unit once a week for NA meetings. I finally asked if I could go too and they told me to sign up. That's when I found out what a whore my mistress was and that she had told and cajoled, promised and lied to all the rest as well. Our stories were similar when disclosed in a general way; I discovered after being deceived and living the lie everyday. That's when I listened and shared with others about wanting to change. I saw Honesty, I found Open mindedness and I was in a room of people filled with Willingness to try another way of life. I had nothing to lose and everything to gain if I found a Higher Power and some faith. So I kept coming back to the
people in that room even though it was hot. They shared what was freely
given to them with me. They said, “It's the only way we can kept what
we've got.” So I kicked the old bat to the curb and followed those foot-
steps in front of me down the road to freedom and a grateful recovery.

Best wishes
Rascal OSP

Contemporary Life

I am like a rock,
Set far upon a lonesome shore,
   Far upon a lonesome shore.

Winds, tides and forces I endure,
   until I am seen no more,
      until I am seen no more . . .

Lee K. 7/15/2014
The Hole in the Wall Group
Head In The Bed

A friend of mine was telling me of a tragedy involving an overdose by an ex-con on the street. When one hears of sad news often they are profoundly affected, which was my case and why I’m telling you this story. I guess I need to because it weighs heavily on my mind.

Once again I thought I could use and not pay the price for my actions but on the other hand I knew the price would be somehow high. Why do I do the same thing over and over and expect different results, insanity lives there in my mind ~ idiot logic.

I was in the kitchen and was going through the mechanics of preparation. I thought for a second about not doing the shot but dismissed it quickly going over all the wacko reasons in my head why I should just charge ahead. After all I’ve gone this far without doing anything that is recommended for a recovering addict prior to taking the plunge. You know like call somebody in the program. Standing up I went for it, right away I knew I had taken way too big a hit and fell backwards hitting the back of my head on the countertop edge.

The next thing I was aware of was me in a hospital bed and being hooked up to all kinds of life support equipment. The headache I had was brutal I needed to buzz the nurse for something to alleviate my pain. The shock came when I couldn’t move my arms. I immediately tried to move my legs and feet ~ nothing. No way not me tears streamed down my face as my mind began to race. I couldn’t get my mind to grasp the thought of not being able to move and the associated problems of being a quadriplegic. How drastically and terribly my life was going to change. Was this it? A head in the bed, oh hell no! This can’t happen to me!

I suddenly woke up, I was hyperventilating and my body’s sweat had completely soaked the sheet. I was on the bottom sheet and the covers were all twisted up and tossed aside. “What a night mare!” I couldn’t believe that none of that even happened but in my sleep and only in my imagination.

Realizing that it was only a bad dream I began to think about the imaginary relapse I’d just had and how it could be that maybe I could really have some reservations in my program. The only thing I knew to do was to talk to my friends in the program and my sponsor. What I did know, I needed a meeting and right now. But I’m in prison and the meeting schedules are determined way in advance but I’ve heard it said,
“It only takes two for a meeting,” so I headed out with that in mind. I couldn’t find anyone right away and it got to be a hassle. Damn, but then I remembered how far I went to get the dope in my dream and the distance or what I needed to do to get there and my current trouble really didn’t seem like much. It was still early in the morning I wanted to get a hold of my sponsor but he was at work in industries. I finally found a guy out on the yard I knew only a little but I had seen him at some of the meetings. I asked him if he had a minute for some NA stuff and he said, Yes,” I knew right then and there it was going to be all right. I opened up to him about what happened somewhat of a stranger but a friend in the fellowship nevertheless.

Anonymous
OSP

“Destiny is what comes out from within, fate is what we meet from without. The choice is ours . . .”
At the risk of being morbid

Well, another one down! Terry Steinhoff did his last shot on Tuesday 10-23-07 Nineteen years in a cage with two years to release and gave up his own air for a shot! Boy yeah, that’s sooo much fun! Such needless tragedy needs to serve some purpose even if it is the hard stark reality, naked for all to see and witness for the waste that it is, maybe this was Terry’s last message to us? Death on a filthy prison floor is such a high personal cost and ultimately a lost to us all.

He started attending NA his last two months alive. It was the first time I had seen him show up there. I think now that it was his spirit trying to warn him to get out while he could. Unfortunately he gave in to old habits before he could commit to a new way of life, maybe thinking that something had changed and this time might be different. But the ends are always the same. I truly believe that God is only so patient with us for so long and that he allows us to squander our lives and then enough is enough.

When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child, when I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. The Hole in the Wall group is growing and becoming stronger people are just growing tired of holding onto and embracing old ways and ideas that serve up nothing but misery and death. We claim to hate this system that confines and yet we live out our lives and unto death in full support of it over a miserable shot of dope. I’m thinking we really need to reevaluate ourselves and decide if we want to keep on living this way! Obviously the choice will ultimately be ours and ours alone, but for me today I don’t choose to be defined by a shot of dope. There is more to life than that, there really is, today I’m happy, joyful and free in recovery.

Peace,
Shawn
Living Life... On Life’s Own Terms

This means that no matter what happens I have to keep on going forward. I will feel feelings even when they are not fun ones. I will accept disappointments and rejections as they come along. I will enjoy happiness and love when it finds me. I experience all of the feelings in the spectrum without covering them up with substances. When I am facing a tough situation, I will pray for the ability to accept what God sends my way, knowing it will happen regardless of my choices.

I will continue to work an NA program during any crisis because this is when I need support the most. Sharing my feelings when they hurt even when I would rather stuff them is living life on life’s own terms. Looking at “what is” and dealing with whatever happens is living life on life’s own terms.

—Unknown
A Reprieve

My 5-year term was like a reprieve on life. I didn’t know how to stay clean. I was sure my life would end with a needle in my arm, and not to many people, caring one way or another. From my stinking thinking the only way to shower, eat and stay clean for me was jail. That is what I thought. Until I went to my first H & I meeting in the county jail, I didn’t know I was an addict or that I had a disease. Denial was my life! Hitting bottom as I did many times, despair and isolation, our disease takes us to a place where we can longer deny the true nature of our problem. We become powerless and our life is unmanageable. Thank God some recovering addict, to save his own soul brings us hope in his story and in the 12 Steps he brings us hope as well. We surrender to a simple way to live one day at a time, how simple is that? In jail I got clean. I got a sponsor, worked the steps to the best of my ability. I got 2 years inside the walls. My release date was coming. They say others will see the change in us before we see it in ourselves. 8-months to the house my dad came to see me, no one had come in 5-years. But he heard some things from me on the phone he had to see for his self. I was finally being honest with him. Not about needing a place to parole to, but about my life and making amends to him for the harm I caused and the stuff I did. Another wake up call for me in those months before release was my sponsor asked me if I had any reservations, you know reserve for relapse? All the things the world did to me, recovery could all be a waste with that first big party when I got out. You addicts know what I mean, I owed myself, I did all that time now it was my time. The real question was did I owe myself a chance or a big party? Would I finally give myself a break and let NA work in my life or have this big great high once again ending up not reporting cause I am dirty and going right back to the pen or did I owe myself a chance?

Well I remember the H&I guy who gave me his phone number in one of my last meetings inside. He said. “Mike call me and I’ll pick you up the night you get out, I’ll take you to an outside meeting! I got out on Friday.

Mike D.
Day by Day

I'm an addict and my name is Brian, my story is pretty much the same: Dysfunctional home. Alcohol and drugs at an early age, pot and then methamphetamine, I thought I had found my first love and I did even more so than my life, wives and my family. I've had home and also cardboard boxes and bridges.

I've been through the jails, institutions and death meth induced psychosis and so on numerous drug charges a prison set, a parolee and less than a year after that I was back in prison. I didn't want to cope with society so I went back to

King Meth and did my robbery for more drugs and here I am back. I discovered NA 20 years ago. I've had periods of clean time in between sets, I've seen the program work I've lived it. I have been stripped to the soul and known I'm powerless. I have found a home in NA behind the walls and seen a power greater than myself. I've got brothers to turn to and see a light at the end of this tunnel. The program says just for today, you never have to use again. I make that choice day-by-day, minute-by-minute till I go home.

Brian
I Am A Newcomer

"Newcomer"—I hear this word at the meeting. I hear great emphasis put on this word. Who is a newcomer? What makes the newcomer so important? How long do I have to come to NA before I am no longer a newcomer?

After much thought, writing and praying, this is what I came up with. I have never been and never will again be, where I am right now. I am a newcomer. In this moment and time, no one has ever been right here, right now. What else can I be, other than a newcomer? We are all brand new to this moment in time. And if I am brand new, right here, right now, what else can I be, other than a newcomer? I am a newcomer... you're a newcomer. Regardless of the amount of clean time you have.

That makes you and me the most important people at any meeting. This leads me to believe that not only is it a privilege, but also my duty, to offer you the gifts I would offer any "newcomer"; the gifts of acceptance, patience, tolerance, caring, sharing and love.

Just for today, to the best of my ability, I will offer these gifts to you and I deny them to myself. Just for today I will view life with wide-eyed wonderment. I will share my experience, strength and hope that I am having as a newcomer, in this moment, in this place and time, right here, right now.

Anonymous
The Hole in the wall Group
"Once was, now am"

Once a life of promise,
and once a man of pride,
I once lived by a moral code,
that once lived but soon after died,

Burdened by social pressures,
Life began to crack,
I'd chosen my poison firmly,
And fell to a wayward track,

Nothing seemed so easy,
Yet nothing seemed so hard,
But all my despairs would decease,
When I flamed that "Crystal Shard,"

But soon this deception stole,
And then began to kill,
All that I once held true,
It even yoked my will,

I lost all that I loved dear,
My children, my wife, I now lack,
I betrayed all, and myself,
Like a knife stabbed in the back,

Now that it's openly clear,
I ponder on what I've done,
Spending these days plagued of misery,
For costly moments of "fun."

Thanks meth! All that fun turned ruin.

Oregon State Penitentiary
Dylan P
Recovery

I am currently involved in a life of recovery here at O.S.P. This gift has been given to me by fellow members, sharing at meetings, and being involved in service work for our group. One word I've heard in meetings is "fellowship". This is a term I never understood until going to meetings on a regular basis. I now feel a real part of The Hole In The Wall Group of NA.

The word "fellowship" to me means that I really listen when others share, without judgment. It also means being honest with myself and sharing things that seem a little uncomfortable. This discomfort does go away once I realize that I am not the only addict that has these feelings like fear, insecurity, shame, anger, etc. In fact when I share these things they no longer seem such an obstacle in my recovery. I have enjoyed this program and I know now that I can look forward to what the future brings. I consider myself fortunate to attend these meetings and realize that indeed there is a Power greater than me, and I find this power present at every NA meeting I attend.

Thanks NA
Brent G.
Without Dope you have Hope

I begin to touch on hope
Without any stinkin' dope
No need to cloud my mind
Humble things I may find.

You must agree, just stick around
As you'll see, hope will be found
You know it is a must
Hand in hand with trust.

Hope is so darn strong
Must believe you belong
Do not let anger rule your being
Cloud your judgment lose your bearing.

You'll be lost, what a cost
Shun danger or you're lost
As you attempt to see
Do your best to stay free.

Slow down, stress becomes a clown
It'll make you do tricks, for a few kicks
The way you become at ease
Is simply to meditate and deeply breathe
Relax get comfortable breath deep stress will roll
You will keep and gain control.

R.M. Jr.
Lower Power?

Recently I was involved in a discussion with some brothers who share recovery with me concerning that if one has a Higher Power then the possibility of a Lower Power would have to exist as well. This reasoning led me to ponder what it was like in active addiction and what happened and ultimately what it is like now.

Like many I felt that in my more formative years I was somehow defective from the factory, I had an emptiness inside. I just didn’t know how to act or where I fit in. This led me to try to fill this black void of a hole inside me with all kinds of sacrificial things, loved ones, relationships, you name it, I pitched it in to be consumed by the maw of my Lower Power accompanied by a giant sucking sound. It had an insatiable voracious appetite eating me up from the inside. I listened to the wrong voice in my head telling me what to do.

Nobody could see that I was hurting and had this demon of a defect, after all my physical appearance showed no signs of this internal spiritual malady. Being of flawed character I sunk to a lower level and low-minded lifestyle giving myself over to complete rascalism and the consequences be damned. I wanted to be accepted so I sought guidance from my lower power the prince of darkness on a daily basis to live a lowlife. I sought people that would accept me, that were like me, troubled youth. They became my friends; we were the wrong influences for each other. Just a bunch of hoodlums up to hooligan shenanigans acting up. Misbehaving at best, feloniest at worst after all it was just easier to be bad, already a disappointment in the eyes of ones that cared. I felt like a complete and utter failure, despair and disillusionment my constant companion. I could not shake the sense of impending doom that the bottom would eventually drop out. I would end up going to hell in a basket. My drug use rampaged.

I played fast and loose in my abandonment of moral turpitude, right and wrong no longer matter drugs and alcohol were my escape. Demon dope was my lower power’s most powerful influence; I was his tool a true disciple of darkness that was my life. My actions were often without thought creating wreckage and havoc in my wake, I just did things. My life was unmanageable I had to regain control somehow free myself from my lower power’s death grip. I was lost trying to figure out what was going down and why was I going down with it.
At first I ran on sheer willpower to overcome my dilemma utilizing some of the strategies I had learned from my encounter with a 12-step program. My first sponsor didn’t give up he suggested that when I thought of a course of action maybe I should just do the opposite. Instead of having a lower power maybe I needed a Higher Power what a novel concept! I was so desperate to change, I was willing to try something different that I began to work the steps. What I was doing previous was not working. I wanted to be comfortable in my own skin so I tried not to add any more wreckage to my past. I just put one foot in front of the other each day and it worked! Today, I cannot imagine my life and lifestyle without the NA program. It works if you work it!

Rascal OSP

Respect Yourself

Take time for yourself. Do things that help you relax. Listen to music. Hang out with friends. Laugh! It’s a great way to relieve stress. Watch a funny movie. Spend time by yourself.

—Unknown
My Share

My name is Rob and I’m an addict. I’d like to welcome the people that are new to the program of Narcotics Anonymous. The largest, most successful and proven recovery program known to man in the history of the world. In the past very few addicts had an opportunity like this, I know from experience that we will love you until you learn to love yourself. It is my desire that you hear something in meetings, in this newsletter that will give the same hope that I have found in these rooms, the literature that NA offers. It makes you want what everyone else has. If you don’t hear the message here try another meeting, maybe the miracle will happen for you too. Just keep coming back.

Prison is part of my story, but it is not my whole story. It’s ironic I had to go to prison to find my freedom from my self-imposed prison and my active addiction that had me enslaved. I realized over a period of time, as a member of the Hole In The Wall Group of NA at OSP, that recovery can flourish anywhere and it is possible to have a good life even while incarcerated. I discovered that Narcotics Anonymous doesn’t care where you are from or where you are going, just what you intend to do about your problem, and how they can help. During the process of my spiritual awakening in the program of narcotics Anonymous, I found faith in people that believed in me and wanted to help me in my recovery.

Today, I have a new life that is better than any I have ever known; I’m happy, joyous and free. I nurture and nourish my program daily, for the precious gift it’s give back to me. I do service when I can with a spondee; I try and never refuse a reasonable request made of me by a member or the fellowship. Like when I in need that my sponsor does for me. I do these things to maintain a good balance in my life and to stay centered in this program that I’m so very grateful too, for saving my life and showing me a new way to live.

Our gratitude speaks when we share, that’s my story and I’m sticking to it. I can only keep what I have by giving it away. Thank you for letting me share.

By
Rob R.
Do It Anyway

People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered
Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives
Be kind anyway.

If you are successful,
you will win some false friends and some true enemies
Succeed anyway.

If your are honest and frank, people may cheat you
Be honest and frank anyway.

What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight
Build anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous
Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow
Do well anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough
Give the world the best you’ve got anyway.

You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and God
It was never between you and them anyway.

Submitted by
Tiffany T. CCCF.
Lend Me Your Hope

Lend me your hope for a while,
I seem to have mislaid mine.
Lost and hopeless feelings accompany my day.
Pain and confusion are my companions.
I know not where to turn;
Looking ahead to future times does not bring forth
Images of renewed hope.
I see troubled times, pain-filled days, and more
Tragedy.

Lend me your hope for a while,
I seem to have mislaid mine.
Hold my hand and hug me,
Listen to all my ramblings, recovery seems so far,
Distant.
The road to healing seems like a long and lonely one.

Lend me your hope for a while,
I seem to have mislaid mine.
Stand by me, offer me your presence, your heart and
Your love.
Acknowledge my pain, it is so real and ever present.
I am overwhelmed with sad and conflicting thoughts.

Lend me your hope for a while,
A time will come when I will heal,
And I will share my renewal, hope and love with
Others.
Author Unknown
Submitted By
David McMullen.
If it feels Good in the Hole . . .

When I was on the street running around getting high it felt like I was a whirlpool of a slow destruction of myself. At first everything was fun and then as time passed and I was further down the world pool my life just got worse. This last time my house got raided and it was round three, in Washington State Corrections for women. I managed to loose everything from my computer, cloths, and my dog. When I was sitting in the Cop Car on my way to lockup, all I could think was how sick and tired of this life I’d been living. I knew right then something needed to change. When I finally left the county on my road trip to prison, I was ready for something different. I started attending the 12 Step programs, I was still using pills and though I was going to NA I wasn’t applying the 12 Steps in my life eventually the drugs led to more trouble for me and I found myself in the hole on a long term behavior sentence.

I’ve been in segregation now for 8 months and these last 2 1/2 months I’ve been off the pills and I’ve been applying the NA principle in my life—I know all any of us in recovery have is today and by living each individual day one day at a time. I can stay clean and it feels great even if I’m still in the hole. Just imagine if it feels good in the hole, how good it would feel if you were free!

Raven C.
Did You Know?

**Buzzard:**
If you put a buzzard in a pen that is 6 feet by 8 that is entirely open at the top, the bird, in spite of its ability to fly, will be an absolute prisoner. The reason is that a buzzard always begins a flight from the ground with a run of 10 to 12 feet. Without space to run, as is its habit, it will not even attempt to fly, but will remain a prisoner for life in a small prison with no top.

**Bat:**
The ordinary bat that flies around at night, a remarkably nimble creature in the air, cannot take off from a level place. When placed on the floor or flat ground, all it can do is shuffle about helplessly and, no doubt, painfully, until it reaches some slight elevation from which it can throw itself into the air. Then, at once, it takes off like a flash.

**Bumblebee:**
A bumblebee, if dropped into an open tumbler, will be there until it dies, unless it is taken out. It never sees the means of escape at the top, but persists in trying to find some way out through the side near the bottom. It will seek a way where none exist, until it completely destroys itself.

**People:**
In many ways, there are lots of people like the buzzard, the bat, and the bumblebee. They are struggling about with all their problems and frustration, not ever realizing that all they have to do is look up.

Submitted by

*Tiffany T. CCCF.*
Save The Children

Whether you have children or not please listen to the words of one addict to another before tossing this aside.

Think of the damage we can and have caused our own children and those of others while in the addiction mode. As long as we could score and use drugs, did we bother to see the looks on the faces of the young surrounding us? Did we ignore our children’s basic needs or not listen to their words only to brush them aside in our quest for more drugs? By the time we got into recovery we may not only have lost the respect of family and friends but of our children as well. My children suffered along as I continued the ritual of addiction, the insanity of using where we lived. The home should be a place of security and love, not a place of secrets. How soon do some of us in recovery lose sight of the incredible damage we have done to the children? Making amends to our children may not be enough; we need to take a hard look to determine if counseling may be needed. Let us not lose sight of the reality that we may have done non-repairable damage to the psyche of the ones so precious to us, I, for one, am guilty for not taking notice, as my own son chose to emulate his father’s image as to take up the family tradition of drug abuse. By the time I found recovery, his addiction had taken his life.

I love him in life and death; yet, I must bare the burden of not being there to guide him by being a good influence. So, I now can only try to make his spirit proud by leading a life of solid recovery and helping those children of addiction see that there is a better way to live. Do not use your addictive past to justify your non-presence in your child’s life.

Take this time to hold and love them as never before. Show them, by example, that there is a better way to live than in the dark depths of addiction.

This I know to be true.

Ken A.
R.I.P.
Stan Bilinski AKA. Pollack
Paroled after 20 years

One year later died

Our friend and brother lived inside this prison with us for over 2 decades. Through a very heartfelt and emotional parole board hearing, that received media coverage and a very powerful photo of Stan. He was granted parole and released back into the community, where he lived for about one year before succumbing to the tragic consequences of our addiction.

Stanley was found alone in his room on August 10, 2009. He died of an apparent overdose. Stan was a good man and was well liked. Although he used heroin as an escape from the horror he witnessed during the Vietnam War and continued to embrace it for the remainder of his life. The freedom in life is simply the freedom to choose. And I hope and pray that we will all continue to choose to deal with the pain and anxiety of this life clean and sober as we were intended. Yes, we will all fall dead, but hopefully not by our own hand trying to escape some painful reality, with a punk ass shot of dope!

Member of the Hole in the Wall Group
Shawn F.
Sage Advice

The scary thing about life in general is that you can do everything right for many years, but all it takes is one foolish decision, a moment or misstep to destroy all that you have accomplished.

The best way to deal with the traps of human nature that can ruin a career or end a life is to get them out in the open.

Commit yourself to speaking up about any concerns, and to taking the conservative response whenever there is any doubt. If you are not comfortable with a given situation, acknowledge and adjust.

Be especially wary of a sudden change of plans. That is usually when our minds are racing, and under those conditions it is really easy to do something stupid; then it is very hard to catch our mistakes until it’s too late.

Remember that choices are yours to make. Be calm. Be happy.

Wallace High
9-15-09
Inspiration

My name is Will and I am an addict. I would like to share my personal story with you.

Some twenty years ago I was attending a meeting when I met a man who would have a profound impact on my life. We introduced ourselves and he began sharing some of his stories and life experiences with the group.

At our next meeting I found out this gentleman was one of our sponsors. I quickly learned he was an accomplished and talented man. He had been a fighter pilot in WWII and had flown with a very distinctive squadron. He was also an author of some note.

The messages he delivered in our meetings seemed to hit home with me, and I could find myself relating to some of the pain he had endured in his life. I was looking forward to our meetings every month. Unfortunately, as fate would have it, a very tragic event would happen to his family and would forever change his outlook.

At our next meeting he told us he could no longer be a part of our group. His family had suffered an unthinkable act of violence perpetrated by an inmate recently released from our institution. He explained that he carried no bad feelings towards those of us in the group, but he didn’t think he could ever come into the prison again.

I remember thinking that this sucks. After all, thanks to him I had quit using and have been clean since. Although it was selfish, I kept thinking about those of us who need your message. Later on I became ashamed of having such thoughts when his family was the one suffering.

To this day I am eternally grateful to this caring human being for showing me that it is possible to live clean and enjoy life with all its ups and downs. My prayer still goes out to this man and his family and has for decades.

Although I’ve remained clean all of these years I have learned that there is more to recovery than just not using. My spiritual recovery is still a work in progress and I continually improve.

Before closing I want to thank all of our outside sponsors and guests along with every member of “The Hole In Wall” group. Thanks for always being there for me.

Hole In The Wall member
Will N.
Love, What A Concept

To live a lie is so very hard to do. I say that is because I was living a lie. All my life I thought that I was not good enough to be happy, and to have and do things in life that other people seem to have and do naturally. I mean things like being able to smile and say “good morning” to my loved ones and mean it! To say “I love you” and mean it—not because it is what is expected of me to do or say.

I came into the rooms without hope, or the concepts of love, honesty, companionship, peace, consideration of others or myself. I became very uneasy with the thought that someone loved me for any reason. I know now that this was because I did not love or respect myself at all.

Being around the rooms has taught me how to love myself and respect myself at all times. It took a lot of work on my part. A lot of tears were shed and it was hard not to do what I always did in the past to get my way at all times. I have to practice at this daily basis.

Life around here has not been all peaches and cream but has been the best life I have ever had. So if you feel like life has thrown you a curve ball just catch it and throw it back with strength and courage. And know you can do anything you want to do in life. In recovery I found out that things in life are up for grabs. That means that you have to put some effort into it to go anywhere in it. So if you are new or old please take advantage of the life that was so freely given to you. Do not sell yourself short!

-Tabu
Dr. Feelgood & Triactinrite

My depressed state of mind had finally reached critical mass as the holidays grew near. I’ve been incarcerated for years now, drug addiction is the root cause for my prison sentence I’m serving but not the actual crime I caught all the time for. I should tell you I’m in a twelve-step recovery program here at the pen for my addiction.

I’ve always had trust issues where people are concerned and when my mental funk plunged to a dangerous low, I could not or would not work the steps, get a sponsor or talk to a friend in the program. Suffice to say I found myself in counsel with Dr. Feelgood for therapeutic treatment that involved the latest and greatest new wonder psychotropic drug.

During this appointment I described my condition to him and we discussed medication for my problem. The good doctor said, “I’ve got something new I would like you to try. People like you have had great success with this new pill, Triactinrite.” My apprehension elevated immediately so I launched into the concerns I had. I spoke first about how, “Often times large drug companies in their haste to get a new developing drug on the market will employ a loss risk management team to analyze the legal exposure and ramifications from negative side effects and reactions from powerful mind/mood altering drugs. Their job is to weigh and estimate the settlement/judgment costs against the enormous anticipated profits. Often sacrificing safety for profit and rushing along with a less than perfect product.” I didn’t want to end up a zombie walking around with a helmet and a drool cup. Dr. Feelgood assured me that “this is not the case here and that Triactinrite could and would solve my problem.” I then expressed my next concern, “drugs tend to mask the problem and not cure them only to have unresolved issues resurface worst than ever.”

My apprehension grew in proportion to the good doctor’s impatience and his desire to get on to servicing his next client. Things went downhill from there I explained to him, “maybe I had jumped the gun by considering Triactinrite for my depression kind of like substituting one drug for another as it relates my drug addiction.” That was the last straw as far as the busy doctor was concerned. I had wasted his limited time on consultation and the results were nil. Dr. Feelgood’s face started to turn red and twist up in a surreal monster like fashion as I heard his distorted loud voice through snarling teeth “You’re not working with me here!” My eyes were bulging out of their sockets in disbelief as I stammered; “It’s just that I don’t think substituting one drug for another will solve my
problem. The consultation ended abruptly and without further intercourse.

I quickly returned to my cell vowing to redouble my efforts in personal recovery. I kicked off my shoes and jumped up on my bunk and reached above my head to the shelf and got my copy of Just for Today and began to read what I hadn't that morning then went to the reference in the Basic Text and finished up with a few moments with my H.P. and deciding it never too late to start your day over. I decided to open up and talk to a friend in recovery and getting a sponsor wasn't so scary.

Anonymous
OSP

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**Today Help Someone**

You can extend your energy through motivation. People today are more concerned with what they can get, than what they can give or do for others. That is why they cannot extend themselves, and are quick to find reason and excuses why they cannot do things. If you accept your limitations, you can build on your weaknesses face on until they become your strengths.

Unknown
Am I using my time constructively or destructively?

I once believed that the passing of time would change me from handling unpleasant situations destructively into solving problems constructively. Whew! Was I wrong about that? Fortunately someone taught me that my choosing to make decisions was the real path to personal change. For example: The decision to replace denial with acceptance. The decision is to replace immature behavior with responsibility. I decided to find a cure instead of continuing to use excuses. So I made the decision to surrender and use the 12 steps as a method of recovery because I never wanted to behave destructively again. Yes, those 12 steps contain powers far greater than anything I've ever had!

I also made decisions to accept and follow the guidance of anyone willing to help me. Thank you to you all! I made decisions to release what I once believed I was entitled to, to stop moralistic judgments of how I thought life should be, to stop blaming others for how I felt or problems I had and to stop enabling others. Instead, I decided to examine the origins of my thoughts and feelings and connect them to what I needed during those moments I felt triggered into behaving destructively. I decided to practice trustworthiness, forgiveness, grace, compassion, trusting others, letting go, empathy, openheartedness, awareness, hope and gratitude. Sometimes I still feel triggered when I witness or experience irresponsibility, control, manipulation, slander, selfishness, collusion, making decisions for others, abuse, complaining etc... Interestingly, those behaviors I feel triggered by were behaviors I would practice myself many years ago. I regret that. My constant rewards for using my time constructively are purpose, peace and joy. Nowadays, when I do feel triggered by something unpleasant, I stop and ask myself, "What am I needing as a consequence of what I am feeling and thinking?" This reduces the possibility of me causing anyone physical harm to others (Something I haven't done in 292 months). And as far as I know, I don't offend others emotionally either, but when I become aware of hurting someone else's feelings, I express regret, make amends and ask for forgiveness. This is something I
very rarely ever did before I worked the 12 steps. I give from the heart and I feel good about it. What a great life. What began, as a curiosity attending meetings has become my way of life, just as I was once allured by selfish behavior, material desires and illegal substances, I am now devoted to AA/NA and any other program that truly enriches my life and the life of others with goodness. Good God, this really feels wonderful! And I thank everyone that has pointed me in the right direction. I thank those that have challenged me so I could test what I claim to have learned and I hope everyone will become embraced by the grace the 12 steps have the power to give. I got it! And that’s why you’ll see me at every meeting. These meetings are my fuel for goodness and I honestly believe they can be the same for you. I hope to see you at the next meeting!

Good luck!

-Socrates

“The path is simple, not easy”

I challenge you to take ownership of your lives in recovery and explore deeply what you can change. Learn from your failures, learn from other’s successes and implement some shifts in what you do each day. Remember that those who are successful are the hard-working population...be that portion of the population.

The truth of how the universe works is simple. In fact so simple that we often fail to realize that we ourselves are an example of the answer.

Unknown
"One Addict’s Story"

I was born 36 years ago in a small town just outside of the metropolis of Los Angeles. As I grew older I realized that there was something that seemed to be different about me. I always felt like I had to be getting over on others to feel full inside. I think I’ve always had that feeling of never having enough. Like I’d better get my share before it’s gone. Never really knowing what it was, but knowing I was going to get mine. This pattern resulted in me becoming a real con artist with no consideration for anyone but myself. My needs always came first. Needless to say, real people or what we sometimes call “normies” could always see me coming and were hip to my games. This resulted in me not having many friends, if any at all. The friends I did have were just around because I could use them to get my needs met in one way or another.

Another thing resulting from my behavior over the years was that my self-esteem was nonexistent. The last years of my using found me alone and friendless, a very sad picture. When I discovered NA in 1989 I think what attracted me most was the fact that you people gave me what I always wanted freely. To be loved. I felt accepted at once when the first addict I met stuck out his hand in welcome. Today I try to emulate the behavior. I try to befriend the new people and I carry the message of NA to addicts in the main jail in Santa Ana via an H & I panel. I feel a sense of worth today that I have given to myself. I sometimes think that maybe I can somehow balance out my past by living clean in today. One thing I do know for sure is that if I give up my recovery I will have nothing. If I could say one thing to the new people I would say Keep It Simple.

-Anonymous
“Don’t sweat the small stuff, and it’s all small stuff.”

Life always has the ability to present us with challenges. No matter how far we have grown and how much we have experienced, there is something new and unexpected around the corner. These lessons are at times emotionally painful, prompting us to become stronger.

In these situations the desire to become stronger is fueled by the fear of future emotional hurt, and can become entwined with the situation itself. When this happens, we can become so attached to the particular event that we put all our effort into ensuring that it never happens again. The reality is that all our effort will probably go to waste, as this situation will not happen again, only to be bowled over by something we never expected.

This desire to be strong is actually telling us that we feel insecure with our own abilities. It indicates that we are trying to battle life’s challenges head on, and essentially take on the universe.

Instead, direct our energy to improving our inner strength and wisdom. Rather than attempting to battle things beyond our control, discover the compassion to rise and find peace above it all.

Unknown
A Special Banquet, A Special Night

I went to a banquet my son Shawn invited me to the other night. I know, the word banquet conjures up images of long white cloth covered tables upon a dais with polyester suited men and gold chains and business-suited women with high hairdo’s seated in a row staring out at the guests with stiff somber faces, and of course, the podium. In the middle with round white clothed tables seated with men and women dressed like the ones at the “honor table,” clinking wine glasses and chatting in low voices while halfway listening to long drawn-out boring speeches given by the honorees thanking everybody and their dead relatives for their awards. Ewvvvvvv!

What we don’t think of is great food, mingling around the room, laughter, camaraderie, and well, yes, there was the boring awards part but it wasn’t drawn out. That was my night at the banquet. It was different then most all other “banquets” that I’ve ever been to. No round tables and stuffy cliques of people. No heavily laden meal of carbohydrates and alcohol to wash it down. No long drawn out speeches thanking the dead relatives. It was a great evening of meeting new people, making new friends, reuniting with old friends and honoring a great bunch of guys. We laughed, we talked, we ate, and we took pictures in a room full of square tables with no tablecloths and great camaraderie.

The food was great. We were served large, juicy, tender fried chicken breast with a breaded coating to match KFC or better. There were huge, enormous enchiladas stuffed with juicy chunks of chicken and chunks of cheese topped with the perfect sauce. I’m a retired chef and I don’t remember tasting such great enchiladas (got to get that recipe)! Thankfully we were not served dried-out overcooked veggies. Instead we had chopped tomatoes, mushrooms, and olives. And bless these, there was NO “Italian Pasta Salad” heavily laden with cheap, old, rancid Italian
salad dressing that no one ever eats but hey, it’s cheap and looks good. Instead we had fresh fruit. The red and green grapes were huge and picked at full ripeness and along with the melons it was a perfect accompaniment. Dessert was awesome, delicious creamy cheesecake and a choice of three different flavored ice creams. I chose berry. Was that Tillamook Ice Cream? Or Dreyers or Breyers? Sure tasted of that quality. It was awesomely good with the cheesecake I had. Water or punch was served as beverages.

My son Shawn introduced me to so many friend and acquaintances that I will never remember names but I enjoyed meeting these people and talking and laughing. I must say; it was a fun event.

Oh did I mention the reason for the “Banquet” or the place of the event? No? Well, it was at the Oregon State Penitentiary put on by the Hole In The Wall Group Of NA. It was their annual Awards Banquet. I guess I didn’t mention it because outside of the immediate prison physical environment (the visiting rooms) it didn’t feel like prison. For two hours (from 6:30 to 8:30pm) it seemed like just a bunch of guys at a regular awesome banquet joined by outside supporters and families.

I was a very pleased mother being there with my son Shawn in this room with lots of laughter, conversation, mingling, great food, and introductions to new people. I had a great time, a lot of fun and ate to my heart’s content delicious and definitely not prison food... Thank you guys for a great evening! It was really worth coming to this “Banquet”. I look forward to next year...

By Dena S.
A members Mother
Clean tips

If it's not yours, don’t take it.
If it’s not true, don’t say it.
If it’s not right, don’t do it.

“We Thing”

We need to change if we are to continue our growth towards freedom. We need to awaken from out of the nightmare of self-centeredness; strife and insecurity that lies at the core of human existence. A new reality, all that is worth having can be kept only by giving it away.

We must be willing to bare differences if we expect to find solutions to problems that arise in our lives.

The rewards of humbling ourselves by asking for help are sweetened.
Peace, Love & NA
I Come First

Each day I will remember I have choices. That I can take care of myself and I can be my first choice. That it’s okay to say no whenever necessary and to stand up for myself, then let it go.

I do not have to please others or be everything to everyone. I do not have to be “it” at all. Who I am now is enough. I can be honest and still be kind. Set boundaries and stick to them.

I can consider my own needs, I will remember to honor myself, and this is my responsibility. I deserve the right to live each day without harm being done to me or by me. I can do all of this without using.
Dana M.
I Should Have Said Nope . . .

The day that I should have said nope,
Instead I dedicated my life in doing dope.
It didn’t matter if I snorted,
slammed or smoked out of a glass stick,
I had sold my soul to something sick.
I lived in my car driving around town thinking I was cool,
Forget what everyone thought I was nobodies fool.
Then one by one people began to leave me alone,
They were all afraid of the monster I had grown.
First it was my dad, mom, kids, then wife,
I figured I no longer needed them in my life.
And everywhere I went
people stared at me because of my condition,
I didn’t notice it yet but I suffered from mal-nutrition.
I tried to shake the thought and do another blast,
Thinking and wondering how long this will last.
What use to be days is now time with no length,
My habit soon started to grow in strength.
Now as time went on things got real bad,
I started robbing everyone, even my Dad.
Suddenly I found myself drowning, gasping for air,
I tried reach out but nobody was there.
I tried to escape my thoughts and have some more fun,
But when all the drugs were gone I thought about my son.

Alfredo M.
The Hole in the Wall Group
OSP 2013
My First Ten Years

My first 10 years of incarceration under the load of the life without parole sentence I felt hopeless and basically helpless concerning my ability to change my reality. My quest back then was to be loaded and disconnected as many days’ of the week as possible trying to numb the pain that I have inflicted on myself.

Un-addressed are issues and feelings of guilt and shame dominated my reasoning for remaining in such a broken, half-assed definition of myself. Of course, playing the game always has a price, once I spent a year in the hole reflecting on the chances that had taken me there; 12 major write ups, that first 10 years! Step 5 says admit to God, to yourself, and another human being the nature of your wrongs. That’s talking about our secrets, and you know as well as I know, we all have secrets, because I have secrets and everyone has secrets. Sometimes those secrets will consume our lives and take us down the most messed-up self-destructive paths. It’s only through getting them out in the open that their power over our life is removed. We begin to heal, and the need to hide behind a wall of addiction begins to diminish and fade into our past like the bad nightmare it was. It’s ok at that point to re-invent and re-define who we are to an image conducive to success.

Success at living life! Living it clean and straight on, loving ourselves enough to realize that we are worth more than these prisons of our own making.

Times are changing right now, due to the economic woes of this nation. A shift has begun back toward the way things were being done 30 years ago. A time when lack of programming and too many rules violations meant your chances at leaving early or even on time was greatly diminished or removed.

Some unsolicited advice would be, pay attention to the choices you make because they could quickly cost your release and compound your current misery.

Hole in the Wall member
Peace Shawn F.
Soldier of Narcotics Anonymous

I am a soldier in the army of Narcotics Anonymous. The God of my understanding is my commanding officer. The 12 Steps and 12 Traditions are my Code of conduct; Experience, Strength and Hope are my weapons of warfare. I have been taught by the Program—trained by experience, tried by adversity and tested by fire. I am a volunteer in this army; and I am enlisted for eternity. I will retire in this army at the rapture or die in this army; but I will not get out, sell out, be talked out, or pushed out. I am faithful, reliable, capable, and dependable.

If my God needs me, I am there. If he needs me in the meeting to share my message, to teach the children, work with the youth, help adults or just sit and learn I'll be there. He can use me because I am there? I am a soldier for NA.

I am not a baby. I do not need to be pampered, petted, primed up, pumped up, picked up, or pepped up. I am a soldier for NA: No one has to call me, remind me, write me, visit me, entice me, or lure me. I am a soldier for NA. I am not a wimp.

I am in place, saluting my program, obeying His orders, praising His name, and building His recovery! No one has to send me flowers, gifts, food, cards, candy or give me handouts. I do not need to be cuddled, cradled, cared for, or catered to. I am committed. I cannot be discouraged enough to turn me aside. I cannot lose enough to cause me to quit. If I end up with nothing, I will still come out ahead. I live for NA.

My God has, and will continue, to supply all my needs. I am more than a conqueror. I will always triumph. I can do all things through NA. Devils cannot defeat me. People cannot disillusion me. Weather cannot weary me. Sickness cannot stop me. Battles cannot beat me. Money cannot buy me. Governments cannot silence me and hell cannot handle me. I am a soldier for NA. Even death cannot destroy me. For when my Commander calls me from this battlefield, He will promote me to Captain and then allow me to rule with Him. I am a soldier in the army of NA and I'm marching, claiming victory. I will not give up. I will not turn around. I am a soldier marching, recovery bound.

Inspired by Unknown Writer
Hole In The Wall Group Member
Christopher J
Set Healthy Boundaries

Sometimes we have to slow down—having too much to do can be a huge cause of stress. Decide what’s most important to you. Learn to say no. Remember that you can’t do it all.

—Unknown

Mind Your Own Business

How I learned to mind my own business
I was walking past the mental hospital the other day,
And all the patients were shouting, ’13...13...13.’
The fence was too high to see over, but I saw a little gap in the planks, so
I looked through to see what was going on...
Some idiot poked me in the eye with a stick
Then they all started shouting ’14...14...14’...

Unknown
A Short Reminder

A man came home from work late, tired and irritated, to find his 5-year-old son waiting for him at the door.

"Daddy, may I ask you a question?"

"Yeah sure, what it is?" replied the man.

"Daddy, how much do you make an hour?"

"That's really none of your business. Why do you ask such a thing?" the man said angrily.

"I just want to know. Please tell me, how much do you make an hour?"

"Well, if you must know, I make $50.00 an hour."

"Oh." The little boy replied with his head down.

"Daddy, may I please borrow $25.00?"

The father was now furious, "If the only reason you asked that is so you can borrow some money to buy a silly toy or some other nonsense, then you march yourself straight to your room and go to bed. Think about the little boy's question. How dare he ask such questions only to get some money?"

After about an hour or so, the man had calmed down, and started to think:

Maybe there was something he really needed to buy with that $25.00 and he really didn't ask for money very often. The man went to the door of the little boy's room and opened the door.

"Are you asleep, Son?" he asked.

"No daddy, I'm awake," replied the boy.

"I've been thinking, maybe I was too hard on you earlier," said the man. "It's been a long day and I took out my aggravation on you. Here's the $25.00 you asked for."

The little boy sat straight up, smiling. "Oh, thank you daddy!" he yelled. Then, reaching under his pillow he pulled out some crumpled up bills.

The man seeing that the boy already had money, started to get angry all over again.

The little boy slowly counted out his money, and then looked up at his father.

"Why do you want more money if you already have some?" the father grumbled.

"Because I didn't have enough, but now I do," the little boy replied.
“Daddy, I have $50.00 now. Can I buy an hour of your time? Please come home early tomorrow, I would like to have dinner with you.”

It’s just a short reminder to all of you working so hard in life. We should not let time slip through our fingers without having spent some time with those who really matter to us, those close to our hearts. Do remember to share that $50.00 worth of your time with someone you love.

If we die tomorrow, the company that we are working for could easily replace us in a matter of hours. But the family & friends we leave behind will feel the loss for the rest of their lives.

—Unknown

A Wake Up

I know it’s hard as your sentence is near...
When all you can think of is year after year
But if you give yourself some time to think...
That’s when you’ll surely find the link
Of what’s happened to you in the past and now...
Are only the things that you allow.
Because when all of this is said and done...
In the mirror you’ll see just only one
So look at that face and scream and shout
But remember
One day and a wake up, they’ll let you out.

Laura J.

CCCF, Oregon
Homecoming For Homie

It was two days before Thanksgiving and I'm finally being released from the Oregon State Penitentiary. I've been down 10 years and they say mankind's knowledge doubles every five years taking that into consideration logically figuring to double and double again compounds to four times. Wow, do I have some catching up to do? Whatever, it's good to be walking out the gate.

I've been going to NA meeting in the joint and really thought I was prepared for my re-entry into the world. I had someone I didn't really know but had met through our meetings arranging to pick me up at the gate and take me to my first meeting and then on to a halfway house. I was hoping he would be my sponsor cause my old sponsor was still locked up.

I walked out the door early 7:15 AM only to find my ride wasn't there. Panic set in immediately! I had a small check I needed to cash. I waited a spell but no one showed. I decided to walk to downtown a short distance away. I started going over in my mind what the little NA pamphlet said as key things. (I.P.No.23) Staying Clean on the Outside * Don't use no matter what, so I started with that. *Go to a NA meeting, I headed out hoofing it. *Ask your Higher Power to keep you clean today. I made a conscious contact with my Higher Power as I walked. It wasn't long I came to a check cashing joint and showed them my temporary ID and paid the fee and got some cash. I remembered the pamphlet said, *Call your sponsor so I called my ride ~ no answer. My panic elevated to fear cause I had the worst part of the day's journey ahead, "felony flats."

I made it through the last ten years of prison life and maybe I was due for a bump doesn't mean I can't still work the program, right? I was getting closer I had to walk past or turn in. When I was down I * Read Na literature, *Talked to other recovering addicts and * Worked the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous but still. I had all that time to make up. I started to think about things, unhealthy things, disturbing things. Then I thought about things I'd heard "one is too many and a thousand never enough." I started to try all the tools in my toolbox. But there I was literally at the cross roads, I found a bus bench and sat down. What was I to do walk across the street and get some or walk on to a meeting? I heard a car horn honking and two dudes were in the front seat the guy sitting shotgun was hanging out the window and waving frantically at me it was
my friend, the one that was suppose to pick me up. They pulled up and he got out and helped me with my trash, shook my hand and was apologizing all at once as he was stuffing me into the backseat. His car had broken down and he couldn’t fix it so he called his sponsor and explained what was going on and he drove him to pick me up. My new friend could tell I was shaken up by his tardiness and lengthy delay; I may have been sweating too. Just that quick we were all off to my first meeting in the free world and just that quick I had a sponsor. He was chattering on the way to the meeting both of us overjoyed things worked out. He asked me about the halfway house and if we were going to have a Thanksgiving dinner and I replied, “Yes a good one too!”

Happy Holidays

Homic

Formerly OSP

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Learn to Let Go

Identify what you can control and what you can’t. Some things that cause stress are easy to change. Like putting your clothes out at night so you don’t have to worry about it the next morning. But you can’t always change things like catching the cold that’s going around or the fact that it’s raining outside. Let go of those things you can’t change.

—Unknown
Never

Drugs make "never" possible by altering reality and the truth. I realized two "nevers" when I was just five years old. I didn’t think I would ever like the taste of beer or get caught stealing it, but I did both. When I played little league for 5 years. I “never” imagined I would get kicked out of the league, but I was. When I started smoking pot I “never” considered putting a needle in my arm until it happened. When I drank myself into a blackout and almost got alcohol poisoning. I thought I’d “never” drink again. I was wrong, quite horribly mistaken. I “never” thought I would steal from, and lie to my parents. I have done both and more then once. When I heard a kid was shot by our school and said it was probably my stupid brother. I “never” thought my words could hurt so much and turnout to be true, but they did and were. When I first was arrested I thought, “never happen again”, until it happens frequently and often when I went to prison I thought surely this is my bottom, but nope, I had brought a shovel and could dig deeper. I never thought it was possible to come to prison willingly eight different times but I have. I never thought I would abandon a mother, father, brother, Sister, Wife, Son and Daughter but my addiction has allowed and accepted that and I did and have. I never thought I would believe my own bullshit but I could if I listened long enough I didn’t think I would pull out two front teeth stripping wire while high but it shocked and sobered me when it happened. I didn’t think I was capable of so much but I am.

When I first went to NA at the age of 15 I thought no way, “never”, not me. I know it all and I’ll never quit. Have you ever said “Never” then regretted it? So I thought, never is not that far away.

Hole In The Wall Member
Samuel H.
Thought For Today

Just where am I in my recovery? Am I sitting in my “comfort zone” instead of stepping over the “faith-line”? Did I share my experience, strength and hope with anyone?

I find the coincidences happening once again; reading Step One and Tradition One. Comparing notes written from past meetings and sharing today’s message with fellow members has shown me just how real the program of recovery is when I apply it to my life and share the “good news”.

By being a part of the group, I sense a belonging and know that as long as I follow the Steps, I believe that my chances of recovery are better than without the group, practicing these principles in all our affairs. We can only carry the message, we cannot determine who will receive it. We would do well to remember to ask God (of our understanding) to continue working through us in our efforts to carry the message to the addict that still suffers.

I am accountable, responsible for my actions, and by working out solutions, I must act. I also know I cannot do it alone. I stay clean, I can recover, and there is hope.

Thinking over how much I have written today and comparing it to my past opinions and self-thoughts shows me just how far I’ve come in my recovery today.

David F.
OSP
Am I a Giver or a Taker?

A few days back I had the good fortune to listen to my friend Ron G. explain his view on this topic and this led me to review my actions and ask myself whether I'm a giver, a taker, or a bit of both. Ron spoke of the percentage of givers and takers and those on the fence that will give when it's convenient and when they know they will receive recognition for giving. I saw myself in all three categories. For many years I was a taker and that's why I came to prison. I took property; I took reputations through gossip and other shameful behavior. I took the peace of others, the sense of security of others and the sense of safety of others. And then I used my extreme greed and chose to take a life. There is no worse example of egoism.

I chose fear and greed over the life of someone I had called my friend. I was no friend. I was a manipulative opportunist. I was a coward refusing to be honest with myself, refusing to face accountability and refusing to own my defects instead of working on them so I could manage them and stop my destructive self-centeredness—**I regret being a taker.**

The magnitude of the damage I caused is more than I can see in my mind's eye. And my mind's eye has seen very much. I don't think I have the capacity to express my remorse, but I try. Nowadays, I practice being the example of what not to do as well as being the example of what to do in order to transition from being a taker to being a giver. I am mindful to practice the steps when I detect myself moving toward being a taker. And when I'm a taker through behaving rebelliously or focusing outward when pointing out the defects of others I immediately practice steps 8, 9 and 10, as well as the entire NA lifestyle. I want to strengthen my being a giver. But I had to go through the process of being on the fence. And sometimes I still do. It took me a long time to become a giver and I have discovered that the more I practice being a giver, the more natural it feels. Am I 100% there? No. But I'm making progress with the gracious help and guidance such as Ron provides for me. Thanks Ron! This conversation with Ron helped bring to light more blind spots and helped me to take responsibility for my defects resulting in reducing them. I don't ever want to be a selfish taker because this would include causing pain to another. And I won't do that. But when I accidentally do, I will apologize, make amends and apply a relapse plan to prevent a reoccurrence. None of that, "I didn't mean to..." Instead, own it and repair it.

Socrates L.
Hole In The Wall Member
A Short Reminder

When I first stared coming to NA it was only to see my daughter. My baby’s mother said it was the only place she would meet me so I could see my newborn baby. I showed up high every week but I knew I needed to change my life. I just didn’t know how or where to start. By the 3rd meeting my baby’s mother saw that the meetings weren’t helping me so she stopped meeting me there. Something told me to keep going though, and at the 4th meeting I was running late but still made it. I was outside smoking a cigarette before going in and a man came out of the meeting to do the same. We started talking and after just a few minutes I decided it was time to change. I just said. “I need help.” That’s all it took. It was like a weight was taken off my shoulders and good things started to happening. I kept coming to the meetings (clean now). I started working the steps and even started treatment. That man is also my sponsor now. I have been clean since January and continue to work the steps. The hardest part was where do I start? If your asking yourself that question right now just know it’s as easy and 3 simple words. “I need help.” Let it be known and your life will get better. Thanks.

To NA’s 12-Steps and its members I have something to look forward to other than prison or death. Now I can be in my daughter’s life and won’t miss it because I’m too high to care. So thank you “God” and thank you NA for giving me my life back.

Hole in The Wall Member

—Timmy Gustus
Can’t Buy Me Love

I thought drugs were my problem, only to find out that once the drugs were gone, I still had issues that I needed to deal with. I did that through the 12-Steps of NA! Through working the steps I found out who I am and why I cheated myself out of so many things. I found out that my self-esteem was very low and that other people’s opinions really mattered to me. I also learned through “The Steps” that I bought a lot of relationships throughout my life.

My latest experience with buying love had me depressed with some years of clean time, not knowing if I wanted to live or die. Not eating, not sleeping, not going to work, not calling my sponsor, not working steps, not helping or should I say, unable to help my sponsees. Also, not being mentally capable of taking care of the most important person in my life, my son.

Those feelings are very scary and Lord knows that I don’t want to go through them again. This experience was very painful, but it was what I needed to get me back in the rooms and doing the Service Work again, like I was raised to do in this Fellowship. The book talks about complacency among addicts who have been around for some time, and it only lists two solutions. I’m glad I chose the rooms.

I had to go through all of this, this past year for me to have some experience, strength and hope to share with the next addict who goes through what I have gone through. I can say it does get better and not to give up before the miracle begins to happen in your life.

Today the light is shining bright in the tunnel and I can walk through with my head held high and be proud of who I am. I am so grateful for the addicts who listened and listened and listened to me day after day—crying, ranting and raving on the same issues for a year and not one of them hung up or said, “girl, I don’t want to hear anymore of that.” I know that there is “Unconditional Love” here in this Fellowship. I have experienced nothing but that.

I am so glad that I am a member of NA today. I truly love you guys, and today I thank my God for the people in the rooms.

Just for today
Robin L.
The List

When making a list of all the people I have harmed I see that I have always hurt those closest to me. In my haste to serve myself and fulfill my needs and wants I stepped on, over, and around the people that cared about me the most. This was the unintentional and intentional consequences of my greedy and selfish behavior.

In thinking about my amends and how I live my life I need to realize just because I say ‘I am sorry’ doesn’t mean my apology is going to be well received by others. It has taken me years of mistakes and hardships to forge deep seated animosities and resentments with my family and friends. These won’t be healed or repaired easily. My trust needs to be earned with no expectations as to how others acknowledge my intentions.

It’s a big list I have lots of people that deserve amends. People I have lied to, cheated on, stolen from, manipulated and neglected just to point out a few. For me I know the best amends I can make to myself and others is to stay clean and live a productive, responsible, pro-social lifestyle. By being dependable and accessible and not expecting or taking things for granted I can once again be entitled to life’s little rewards. Trust, respect, commitment, understanding, empathy......

My family, friends and recovery community as well as society in its entirety deserve more than I have given to date. I am capable of being kind, courteous and polite and walking and standing tall and proud. I am who I am. I’d like to thank you all for allowing me to be of service and also congratulate Jack B. in his successful bid for President. Our program works when you are diligent and commit to changing your life.

Everything,

Sam H.
Assistant,
The Hole in the Wall Group
Twenty Years

"It takes twenty years
to make an overnight success."

-Eddie Canton

My name is Rich; I've been locked in a cage here in OSP since July 2001. By the time you read this I'll be a free man, "living life on life's terms". The "Hole in the Wall Group" in OSP is where I discovered recovery from my addictions to drugs, alcohol, and many character defects and shortcomings.

After my arrest on January 5, 2001, I decided to set some realistic goals. Stay clean, and attempt to repair the relationships that I damaged while deep in my addictions. These goals were challenging, achievable, realistic, and measurable. Addicts, who take the future into consideration with every current decision they make, and yet live "one day at a time," are more likely to succeed. On the other hand, the hope of instant gratification, "I want what I want and I want it now," is an ever-present companion. Wanting fast results is what the drugs, alcohol, and fast life gave me. And this was the primary cause of my failure, every time. For over twenty years I lived this way and it was going to take some time for change to set in. So, "easy does it" was my motto. I've learned throughout the years, for every excuse there's an alternative or solution -- another way to make the choices that will improve my results and make a difference. As one of my many mentors, Kelly G. said, "you will always have the thoughts, just don't act on them".

I try to identify a handful of motivational "quotes" or favorite NA "Just for today" readings that mean something positive to me, and that relate to my circumstances. These "quotes" also help me to recognize negative statements that I repeatedly tell myself so I can replace them with more positive ones. I try to use thinking habits that work for me and not against me.

We are addicts; we will always have negative thoughts. "I can control my addiction," or, "I'm only hurting myself". I fail to think of all those that my choices affect.

Remember, success is like recovery; it only works, "One day at a time". Having others in the NA program, who help and support your progress can make a major difference in your motivation.
A journal of your 12-step work, helps monitor your habits and keeps you focused. Working a daily “Tenth Step,” we continued to take a personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it. This will create a record of your previous results, positive and negative. It reminds you of what you need to improve, and of your accomplishments. Writing things down is a genuine commitment to your goals. It teaches you the things you want to change, and how to get positive results. Recovering addicts realize they may face setbacks along the way, that these may result in relapse. To try to avoid these setbacks, work a daily “Tenth-Step” report.

In recovery we will better understand our habits, our attitudes, and the character defects that are holding us back. Understanding these shortcomings will lessen their impact on our lives.

Can you identify one or more things that you know are holding you back from getting the results you want? As long as these barriers remain unseen and unidentified, “We’re only as sick as our secrets”. These will prevent you from getting what you want. A person’s attitude determines his or her altitude—the heights to which he or she will rise. Be aware of your thoughts and your level of self-confidence.

As Gene Brown said; “Today’s opportunities erase yesterdays failures”. I’ve now been clean 11 ½ years.

“One day at a time”.

— Rich P.
Letter to the Group

My story is much like everyone else’s. That was a big shock to me. I’ve been addicted to meth for over 30 years. I’ve spent the majority of my life behind bars & in prison. To look at my body and the scars you’d think I’m into other drugs. I’m now in the battle of my life & thanks to NA a good fellowship, a great sponsor & finally after two years of faking it I worked the steps. I now have a shot at rediscovering me. I can take off the masks of my past & look at myself in the mirror. I’ve got hopes and dreams. I’ve got a meaningful relationship today, not just based on sex & focused on me. I’ve got friends in NA who care about how I’m doing & not what I’m doing. I no longer focus on my past, but on today & even tomorrow.

Thank you NA for giving my life back. I’ll be 53 when I get out of here, 53 going on 20.

Respectfully,
Carl P.
Holding Your Peace

It's called holding your peace. It comes right out of the maturity of being an adult. Holding your peace is maturity. Adults look out at the world from a specific place. That place is the place of confidence and control of one's self and one's actions.

Having found that place we adults know a few things. We know that each of us is not the only causal factor in our lives. But we also know that we are a causal factor. We know that there is honor in the latter proposition. We know that to own everything in our lives is an honor.

That is where holding our peace comes in. We know and accept that certain factors may have entered our lives at the hands of others. But we never go on the defensive. We never cry out "it's not my fault!" Instead, we hold our peace. "This is me!" We say: "This is me; take it or leave it." We know heaven is watching and God has noted the score.

This is called holding our peace. It is our most daunting commission...

Lee K. 4/14/2014
The Hole in the Wall Group
The State of Grace

What is it that matters most? Make that our cause. Name the concept. Is it a thing, an idea or more?

What do you love most of all? Is it not Grace, wherever it appears? Grace, that feeling of comfort, of wellbeing, of being undisturbed and unconflicted, of everything just so, just as it is supposed to be.

So, what is most important? It is not a thing, or an idea. It is a status, a state of being.

You know what the opposite of that state is. You know the angst and the moil, the bafflement and the confounding. This is the opposite of that cherished state. This is the opposite of Grace. The opposite of Grace is the state of angst.


And what then causes the state of angst? Conflict. Primarily Grace is a casualty of conflict. Meeting resistance, dishonesty, rebuke. These factors we meet at the edges of our calm, our well-being. These factors disturb our space, our life. We meet them in abstracts, in ideologies, in the person of others. Angst comes into our lives from without. Our reaction is to forsake our Grace, that matters most.

Grace comes from harmony. Inner harmony is possible while outward harmony is elusive. But outward harmony is also possible. And nothing so favors the achievement of Grace as establishing outward harmony. Grace thrives on Harmony.

Peace and Harmony to people of Goodwill. Grace to others, and to ourselves. Harmony between people of Goodwill, that Grace might dwell in the world, not only in the individual mind.

Working for Grace, we work for Harmony and Tranquility. We work to join together people of Goodwill and like minds. We work to exclude the people of Drama, Strife and Conflict, and who give offense. Like children we learn to fear them. We avoid them, lest they murder that delicate, retiring, demurring Grace we have sheltered in the world.

We are the refuge of Grace and Grace reciprocates a refuge for us. We are the Guardians of that sanctuary. Our work is Harmony, our reward is Grace.

Anonymous,
The Hole in the Wall Group
Dear Meth,

Just thought I would write you one last time. You know, in the beginning when we first met life was good, exciting. But now we’ve grown apart because you’ve taken all I ever cared about. You made me into the person I never wanted to be. You made me lie, cheat, steal. You took my mind and warped it, made it weak, you’re relentless. You have taken my healthy body and destroyed it bit by bit, day by day. Satan is your maker and I no longer want your punk ass around. So if you see me on the block, run mother#$%&*#, ‘cause I got something for you . . . I have a new friend “NA” and I no longer need you. So stay away from my family and outta my way. Goodbye meth, punk!

Paul R.
The Hole in the Wall Group

“God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.”

-The Serenity Prayer
Reflections on Step Four

“We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves”

It is time for a deep personal reflection. I am taking off my mask of deception and renewing my soul, so that I can be the person have always wanted to be. During my addiction I was at the point in my life where I didn’t want to grow up. I still wanted to do drugs and party, because in my mind I told myself “I got to make up for all the countless years in prison.” Here I was 25 years old and never got to experience my 21st birthday, and several others. You see, in prison your time stops and in my head I thought that I had to make up for lost time. My time was lost because I didn’t do anything productive with my life while incarcerated. Most of the time I thought about how I could improve my crimes and about fulfilling my greatest fantasies upon my release. My problem with going to prison was that I didn’t realize I had a drug problem. And NA to me was for squares.

The day I was released from prison my father picked me up and gave me a pound of methamphetamine. I was feeling like I was on top of the world, and nothing or anybody could stop me. It was the start of a long, rough road. Then I met a woman who wanted to do everything I fantasized about. We shot up dope, lived the lie of the rich, staying in world-class hotels, driving nice cars, etc. then something happened. My fiancé got pregnant. I was happy, but at the same time I wanted to still party and so we did. We kept on shooting dope all the way until the birth. And no matter how close I came to losing my son I still had that lost time issue going on in my head. As much as I loved my baby boy I couldn’t stop. Then, when my son was taken into custody things got even worse. I lost everything. I was letting the love of my life sleep with other men and I started resenting her for that. My disease progressed and my habit became stronger. I started to abuse my fiancé and had become unfaithful. As time went on I hit rock bottom and was barely crawling. I burglarized my stepfather’s house and betrayed everyone I know. I lied, cheated manipulated and stole wherever I could and whenever I could. And inside me I was screaming for help. I wanted treatment, but my pride told me that getting help would only be embarrassing. Then, when I finally got to treatment I let outside influences trigger me to giving up. With my weak mind and no will-power I left the Eastern Oregon Alcohol Foundation
facility and stole a car to get back to Portland. After that I ended up calling collect from Multnomah County Justice Center. And I was furious that nobody would bail me out. I let my family down, but most of all I broke my own heart and let myself down.

How did I feel about my actions? I was heart broken, mad at the world, cursing God and I blamed everyone who wouldn’t help me. “How stupid I was to let my drug use overpower my emotions, my willpower and my life.” The things I resent most are: I resent that I ever let my wife sleep with other men, I resent ever abusing her, I resent stealing other peoples’ things, I resent putting drugs before my family, I resent ever coming back to prison and the messed up life that I lived. I almost lost the most important person in my life, the best relationship I have ever had, and the only woman that completes me. Though as painful as sad my life has been, I cannot change my past.

I have no way of knowing what the future holds and I can only worry about today, because through NA I have friends, a support group, a family who loves me and a program that teaches me a new way of life. As long as I stay clean “just for today” I can do it again tomorrow. I now have 238 days clean and this is my FOURTH STEP!

Alfredo M. 5/30/2013
The Hole in the Wall Group
On Honor I

I remember my sense of honor. I remember being a cowboy, like Roy Rogers or The Lone Ranger. I remember believing in that, in the values of the Frontier and the Wild West. I remember upholding the values of Daniel Boone and David Crockett. I remember Mom saying work hard and fight back and the world will make room for you. I remember believing we don’t kick ‘em when they’re down, we don’t break ‘em so they can’t work, and we never refuse to reconcile. I remember knowing exactly what to do and why to do it in every instance.

This was my sense of honor as a young boy.

It is an odd time we live in. Honor is impugned. Many of the leading personalities who are supposed to be our role models consider honor to be an outdated concept. They would have us think, and decide what to do, and why to do it, based upon what is most practical in satisfying our desired ends. Instead of following the example set by those worthy men and women whom we respect, they would have us start from scratch and decide for ourselves what we ought to do, and why we ought to do it.

But I remember my sense of honor. I remember how it served me. I remember how I felt as I lived in that honor, and fulfilled my duty to those around me, those who shared those same values. I remember shining bright, and I remember falling short. And I remember reconciliation and redemption was mine to claim, because it was honorable to grant. The needs and fears of folks did not override the values we upheld.

On Honor II

The question is what happened to the sense of honor? We became too insecure to operate that way. We became too cerebral to trust. We decided that it was favorable to keep an eye on the prize, to look out for number one. We became dislocated and alienated and mistrusting. And we fell from honor. As individuals we lost our way. I betrayed my best friend. Then I murdered him to remedy our feud. I lost my honor in an epic fail. No one trusts me now.

When I talk to folks about honor they seem open to it. When I call attention to the beauty and splendor expressed in honor in times past they grow wistful. Like me they long for that age of moral beauty. But
they usually retreat into the cynicism and ugliness. They think a restoration of honor to be impossible and so they react against it. They consciously choose the practical motive of self-interest over the ethical guide of honor.

But I tell them that their choice is the reason we no longer operate on honor, because individuals have consciously forsaken it. There will be no honor if no one chooses it. The beauty of honor is there to be had if only we choose it. Others might not choose it. And they might take advantage of those who do. Honor might be out of harmony with all of the world. But honor comes into the world through us. If we don’t choose it, it will not exist. That means if we listen to the generation of cynics, our world will lack honor. But if we choose honor ourselves, there will be honor amongst us, at least.

And with our honor we can reclaim some of that certainty and dignity we once cared so much about.

**On Honor III**

Honor is not virtue. Honor is a reciprocal outward social function. Virtue is independent of others. Honor is no substitute for virtue. But honor is a start.

The important factor for us is to avoid negative honor. The kind of honor paid to reckless behavior, or to being ‘cool’ and fitting in. This type of honor is a social control in the hands not of the better community, but in the hands of folks who very likely do not have our best interest at heart.

When you are being encouraged to act in manners not in your best interest, remember, the favorable approval you are courting is not a virtue, but only social norm. Many of us have spent our lives fleeing the mainstream social norms. This is the behavior that landed many of us in addiction in the first place. But the truth is we never really escaped pursuing social norms, we only exchanged the mainstream social-proofs for the counter-culture versions.

Virtue, not honor, should be the ideal we are aspiring to. But honor has its place. Just try to court honor among the people whom you respect, and who respect you.

**Lee K.**

The Hole in the Wall Group
Oops! Ouch!

I’m afraid that there’s a MONSTER inside of me
that if released will destroy me.
I’m terrified to look at myself, to probe myself inside.
I’m afraid that if I examine my actions or motives,
I’ll find the sickness of a bottomless black pit
of SELFISHNESS AND HATRED.
As I take the steps, I find that my fears are unwarranted.
I’m human just like everyone else.
I have my moments just like everyone else.
I question my motives. I question my existence.
I can only change what I acknowledge to understand,
rather than to continue with the fear buried inside and bring it out to the open.

“Mistakes aren’t tragedies, there opportunities.”

K-LO
The Hole in the Wall Group
Honesty

There’s only one thing that I ask, it’s the same thing I promise you—
Honesty

We are to always grow together,
As we need and want to do.
We must be honest—with ourselves,
With each other, in the little and bigger things we do.
That’s what builds the trust, that is needed to communicate with each
other.
Let us promise Honesty,
Even, when it’s not the easiest thing to do.
I believe a promise to each other today
Will lead us to the promise of something very
Special together tomorrow.

Kevin H.
The Hole in the wall Group
Hello,
My name is Lee K. I am the editor of this newsletter. But something I have always been much less certain about is the answer to the question of 'Who am I?' I scarcely can say when it was I ceased to be a boy and became a man. Much less can I answer in confident tones who I really am.

I have struggled with this all of my life. If it wasn’t the question itself confronting me, then it was the implications of my past deeds, and what they meant to who I really am. After a great deal of time and thinking I came to some conclusions about how to find myself.

I have written the following questions to assist others in their quest to answer 'Who am I?'

Answer each question as you read it.

**Three Wishes**

1) If I could do any one thing, what would that be?
2) If I could have any one item, what would it be?
3) If I could give any gift, what would it be?

**My Life**

4) What is the best moment of my life?
5) What is the worst moment of my life?
6) What moment in my life am I most proud of?

**My Beliefs**

7) What act or belief am I most proud of?
8) What act or thought am I most ashamed of?
9) Do I believe in virtue that transcends this world?
10) Which values and virtues do I hold in high regard?

**My People**

11) Whom do I hold in the highest regard? Name three individuals from the past or the present.
12) Whom do I love? Name three people.
13) Do those whom I love and those whom I respect share the values I hold in high regard?
Question:
14) Do I still have the same three wishes?

These are the factors that most define Who I Am. My aspirations, my beliefs, and my relationships are the most important factors of who I am. Much more so than anything I have done. And I have significant control over these factors.

Recovery is possible. Redemption is possible. A future is possible.

Lee K.
The Hole in the Wall Group

"It is not what you read that really counts, its what you think about what you read . . ."
Crossing the Line

There's a fine line between need and want - - -
And it isn't always a straight line . . .
And it's sometimes a dotted line . . .

But usually
The kinda line
That we all have to walk --
That we all have to
Somehow find our balance on - - -

It's the kinda line that "forms at the left",
It leads us onward, outward, forward, upward, backward

And anyway . . . .
Yeah,
It leads us away . . . . .
Beside still waters,
Where we don't have much need or want of anything
Not really . . 
Know what I mean???

Krickett
The Hole in the Wall Group
To Rediscover Me

I’m taking time, to rediscover me,
    I was falling short of what I could be.
I’ve wasted dreams & I’ve wasted time,
    I’ve thrown away what could have been mine.

I’ve tortured souls & I’ve broken hearts,
    I’ve done things that tore families apart.
I’ve used some people & they’ve used me,
    For years I thought its where I wanted to be.

I actually felt that I could be a king,
    Never really thinking of what it would mean.
But now I know that all I’ve gained,
    Was all at the cost of another man’s pain.

As I look back at my past sins,
    It’s hard to believe what I was back then.
Deep down I knew what others perceived,
    Was someone I’d created for others to see.

So now I’m taking this time that I’ve got,
    To learn to be the me I’d forgot.
So when my time comes to be released,
    I can finally be who I’ve wanted to be.

Carl P.
The Hole in the Wall Group
A Salute To Diz

My good friend and brother of four decades, Dizzy Duane, passed away a few months ago. He was 60 years old. The cancer took him. He was 22 years clean of heroin addiction—through the grace of God and a ceaseless devotion to the N.A. program.

In April, I’ll be clean of my own heroin demons for twenty years, in large measure due to the constant encouragement and prayers from Diz. We occasionally debated whether it was easier to stay sober and clean in “the world” or in “the joint.” I thought it would be harder for him to stay clean out there in the world, because there seemed to be a dope house on every corner, easy access to the poison. But Diz said no, here a guy can call his sponsor any time, find a meeting most any night of the week. Diz felt like it would be harder to keep straight in prison, where the temptation is great to alter our reality in order to make the walls evaporate.

After a number of these debates, we finally concluded that a paradox existed. Both the easiest and the hardest place to stay clean and sober is the PLACE YOU ARE AT, at any given time. Determination and willpower are the keys. And given that lack of those disciplines made us easy marks for the opium devils in the first place, it was only the newfound ability to replace our own will with that of a higher power that allowed for the true rehabilitation of heart, mind, and soul.

Dizzy gave that message to anyone who would listen, steered many a forlorn soul into N.A. or A.A. programs. He practiced what he preached, and preached what he practiced. God bless him, real good. I’ll see you on the other side, brother.

Jeff T.
The Hole in the wall Group
We Do Recover

*Walter F. is a long-standing member of The Hole in the Wall Group.*

Members of the Hole In The Wall Group of Narcotics Anonymous, after over 25 years here at OSP, I will be leaving this place on April 25!! I want to thank each and every one of you for your support throughout my time here. By sharing your stories of courage, strength, and hope, I was able to achieve 16 years of recovery. I look forward my future beyond these prison walls. Take care and stay the course.

With gratitude,

*Walter F.*
My Home

My home is one of headaches
A place of steel and stone,
A iron cell, a place in hell,
A place where I stand alone.

Where dreams are lost, and where
hopes are crushed, and where memories
fade away, where life grows dim
in death’s gleaming grin while the
pain is inflicted within.

No one understands that I’m a man,
part of the human race.
A life I’ve abused, I’m often confused
Time now shows upon my face.

Who am I to sing such woe and
Who are you to listen. Who is the
Keeper of the keys that tosses
me to and fro, who are all these
Sorrow-filled faces I see each day
in this, the forgotten world.

I try to live, yet slowly die
while I let out each and every
sigh, that is only lost within these
drab walls of this, the forgotten world.

I pray someday that I might say
that I made it through alive
Never again will my addiction win
For a better life I strive.

By Walter F.
The Hole in the Wall Group
Goodbye Heroin

The beast swims 'round
in the poisoned well—
the brackish pool
of the addict's hell—
no purchase found
on walls too slick to climb.
The fix becomes
Unholy grail—
No limit on
The things for sale.
No refunds given
To the price of crime.

Then one day from
Your infernal nod
You wake to learn
There is a God
Who loves you
Despite the state you're in,
And you offer up
The pain you know
And soon a flood
Of grace bestows
Forgiveness, and your
Life anew begins.

Goodbye to you,
foul heroin.
I place my trust
in a newfound friend
Who ever stoops
To lift me from my fall.
Goodbye to opiate
False embrace,
needle, spoon and
sad disgrace.
I give to God
My everything, my all.

Jeff T.
The Hole in the wall Group
Hope and Recovery

"I believe we can prove others wrong and help change some ideas about addiction. Through positive encouragement to new comers, we can move forward in recovery to better all our lives. This can be done by giving hope and experience through ourselves and others."

"NA has given me a very real sense of belonging, just like another family, both here in prison and in the outside world. I'm lucky to have seen the good work done and improved lives in numerous towns across the United States. It is essentially the same everywhere. I do believe God works through all of us that way."

Pete,
The Hole in the Wall Group
The
Hole in the Wall Group
of Narcotics Anonymous
Part Two:

A PORTRAIT OF THE GROUP

Selections from the Executive Body Notes 2006 through 2014
The Hole in the Wall Group
Of
Narcotics Anonymous

"The only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using."
Editor's Note

Spring has sprung and if you are reading this then it is likely that I'm not but time is passing quickly. I like this time of year when the new growth starts blooming in nature and the babies of all creatures emerge tentatively to open their eyes and take their first steps. It gets me thinking of tending and maintaining my own spiritual garden that is my personal recovery program. I nurture it for the precious gift it is hoping and expecting new growth if I put in the work. I like to review daily how I have acted regarding real time real life situations, am I living in the here and now? Have I been honestly working my program on a daily basis knowing what I know about my addiction? Have I acted impulsively said or done things that may have hurt someone else? Have I been patient in trying situations? Have I taken time for me and my Higher Power to spend some quality time today; making sure I have a Good Orderly Direction and balance in my life that did not exist when I was using. As long as I attend meetings regularly, work the steps, do service work, talk with my sponsor and make myself available to new people, today I remain positive with an optimistic outlook that everything will be all right.

Finally, there was this little bird in the barnyard that was scavenging for food when it came upon a fresh steaming pile of cow dung with some whole corn in it. The little bird got so full that it could barely get off the ground and fly up on the handle on the barn door. It rested a moment then chose to fly down but was so full it crashed and started chirping. A cat heard the bird and immediately found it grounded and ate the little bird; Motto don't fly off the handle if you are full of dung or never miss an opportunity to shut up. Or our choices are what determine our lives?

Grateful to Serve,
Rob R.
A Clerk’s Farewell

I have enjoyed the privilege of being able to serve The Hole In The Wall Group and myself during my tenure as clerk. I have benefited immensely from the meetings, working the Steps in our book study, participating in service work (Steering Committee) and making myself available to newcomers and members alike.

Always in Service,
Kurt M

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Letter to the Editor

Dear Hole In The Wall Group,

I’m writing to let you guys know that I do support your group by service work and most recently the book drive. I feel privileged to be allowed to come into the annual Banquets and have enjoyed myself immensely seeing and being a part of the fellowship of drug free men and women. However, I’m not allowed to come into your meetings as a guest because I visit one of you at the penitentiary, but consider me an outside member anyway. I think the Hole In The Wall Group is on the right track and I believe in all of you. May your Higher Power bless you all in your recovery and keep you safe!!

In Loving Service,
Peggy S.
Assistant Secretary

I hope that you all have had a decent year and that you have had the opportunity to get in touch with your loved ones to spread some Holiday Cheer! I say it is the time of giving, caring and sharing with other human beings.

In NA I have learned that I get to keep what I have by giving it away. I continue to go to meetings and share my experience strength and hope with the lure that another addict will find a way to arrest his or her addiction through my story. Sharing my Story is a conscious reminder of where I've come from and how I have taken an active role in my recovery. I started going to NA meetings in 1990, after having 12 years clean time it seems as though I would be cured by now, however I know that I am always just one decision away from that insanity that the drugs seem to bring into our lives. I thank God every day for the freedom from active addiction. If you noticed the time frame from 1990 and 12 years it is because I do know how easy it is to make one or two bad decisions along the way. The most important thing today is that I am clean! It says in our literature that we are not perfect; yes we may fail but we are not failures. We have the ability to keep trying until we finally get it figured out by going back to meetings, by getting a sponsor, working the 4th step. Take out that old dusty It Works How And Why book and actually read the printed pages! The literature that Narcotics Anonymous shares with anyone that wants to pick it up says "we do not have to live in this insanity any more and here are some steps that we have found vital in our road to recovery!" So let's make one more good decision and take an active role in yours and my recovery. I hope that in your recovery, this New Year will bring you a sense of happiness and joy through-out your journey! I hope to see you at the meetings.

Your Assistant Secretary
Kenny H
Treasurer Report

I want to take this time to say hello to all our members and to extend a heartfelt welcome to our new members. It says a lot about people who are willing to change their lives in this environment. Congratulations for taking the steps to being happier and better people. Keep up the good work! Donations are a major help in the keeping our group above board and functioning. Your repeated help is appreciated. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,
Eric O. Treasurer

GSR Notes

The middle of March is upon us and spring is here. Spring brings new and fresh life. It makes me think about the new and fresh life that our meetings, working the Steps and applying the principals to my life has done for me. To the newcomers or people who haven’t given our program a chance this probably sounds a little... well you know... I give you my word that if you actually give the program a chance, come to our meetings, share, read the literature and work the steps that you too might find a new and fresh life.

Give yourself a chance; take advantage of this opportunity and time. There is so much more to life than these places and lifestyles that always lead us here. You, your families and friends deserve more...

Hope to see you at one of our meetings soon! To our members, outside guests and supporters thank you for continued membership and support. Keep up the hard work and effort. Great things come to those who work for them...

From The Heart,
Eric N.
Editor's Note

Hello, all fellow N.A. brothers. I feel very fortunate to be your new NA clerk and newsletter editor, it is an honor to be in the Hole in the Wall Group here at OSP. I've seen first hand how hard it is to get in this program due to waiting lists and administrative processing, it just doesn't move as fast as we all would like. I feel for those who need this program and these meetings because all recovering addicts need this program, it works if you work it and god knows we all are worth it.

I thank my higher power for picking me as the new NA clerk. It's an awesome opportunity for me, and I feel blessed. People that know what kind of person I was as an addict would be amazed by the fact I am in the program and am working it let alone being one of the clerks of the program. I could be the poster boy for the program. Although anyone with the desire can be in this program. If it works for me, it can work for you if you work it. We all are worth being in this program. All we need to do is have the desire to want to stop using. This program is the best place to start. In fact it's the only place in my opinion. Narcotics Anonymous is the most successful drug recovery program in the history of the world known to man and it's free!

I want to thank god and the Hole in the Wall Group for the opportunity of being in the club and being selected as our clerk it means quite a lot to me.

Thank you!
Chris J.
Treasurer Report

Hello members and readers. Well we are in the winter months now, the time of year we like to curl up in front of a nice warm fire with our loved ones. We don't have that luxury right now but we do have the warmth and caring of the group. A place where members of the group can come and share and support each other in their time of need.

We are a family of addicts trying to change our lives and be better people for our families and communities, but most of all we do it for ourselves. Let us enjoy the company and trust of each other in the group so that when we do have the opportunity to enjoy the holidays we can actually have the heart and presence of mind to show up and share the holidays with those we love, our families. We look forward to everyone's participation and unity and the newcomers who are the most important people at any meeting.
Keep the Hope alive and well!!!

Respectfully,

Eric O. Treasurer
Letter to the Group

Hello Family,

Thank you for sharing your newsletter and your recovery with Anchorage, Alaska. Joseph G is the current chair of the Alaska Area newsletter; I am giving your newsletter to Joseph after thoroughly reading it myself. I am enclosing, for you, a copy of our most recent Never Alone.

Oregon is special to me. I was born in Portland, grew up in Government Camp, and graduated from the University of Oregon. I have many memories of crisp, sunny days and powder snow; spring blooming and bare feet on the soft dirt trails of the mountain; summer swimming in mountain lakes; fall rain and leaves turning colors, beckoning winter.

I too, have memories of my addict driven life and of beginning my substance abuse...

After moving to Sitka, Alaska in 1974 I got clean clean through the 12-step formula for living and the love from the fellowship. In 1980 I came to Anchorage. Not having followed the suggestions talked about in meetings and by living the program according to Susan; I was not prepared to accept my part in a major event. I chose a path that led me away from meetings; I, again, changed people, places, and things. And, in 1984, I extended my arm and said, “me too”. Nine more years of learning experiences most of which I hope to never repeat. I was blessed with the opportunity to return to recovery.

N.A. is my foundation; my family is N.A.; I go to as many meetings as I am able; I remember that when I “quit coming back” I went out. I choose, today, to maintain insurance that confronts my always-available addict voice and supports my recovery voice. I find that insurance in meetings, with my sponsor, living the steps, maintaining close, daily contact with the higher power of my understanding, and in service.

I am grateful for all the opportunities and learning experiences I have been blessed with through service in groups, at Area, as a member of the H & I, PI, newsletter, and entertainment sub-committees.

Unity Day 2005. Those of us unable to attend the World meeting in Hawaii, got together at the Alano Club in Anchorage and participated in the live phone meeting. I was particularly happy to hear that
you, there in Oregon, were connected to the phone system and shared. WOW! What a wonderful and powerful fellowship we have.

Keep-on-keeping-on, one-day, one-step-at-a-time along the journey that HP suggests.

In loving service,
Susan S.

Secretary

What is my donation doing? Your donation is used to achieve our primary purpose of carrying the message to the addict that still suffers. We do this by publishing a quarterly newsletter that is free to all inmates and other areas in the USA that participate in the newsletter exchange. The Hole In The Wall Group believes in sharing the message and not selling it so we rely solely on donations and outside contributions to facilitate production and distribution.

Your donations go to office supplies, clean time coins / certificates, literature / books and the occasional donation to World Services and the sometimes occasional treat we enjoy at meetings. This is all accomplished through the generosity of those in recovery that are making great strides and proactively taking positive steps in changing their lives and becoming a useful member of society. By walking the talk on a daily basis here at the penitentiary we all carry the message and freely give of ourselves to the addict that still suffers. We address this devastating societal problem head on and offer hope to the addict that restoration and recovery is possible. Since all this is free what does one have to lose?

It is our greatest hope that a welcomed by-product of this process will be the building of cooperation with administration. Through our mission we can become one society working together for social change making the world and our communities a better place.

In Loving Service,
Rob R.
Secretary

Greetings to my brothers and sisters in recovery. My name is Ricky and I'm an addict. I am also a member of the "Hole In The Wall Group" of Narcotics Anonymous. I'm 49 years old and started getting high at age 8, stealing my moms pills and my grandpas whisky. My addiction progressed and I started shooting dope when I was 16. My life spiraled out of control, and I ended up involved in a drug related homicide at age 20. I was sentenced to 15 years to life, and had no idea it would be nearly 30 years before I would be given the opportunity at my freedom again. I continued to shoot dope for over 20 years of my incarceration just to shut off this reality and deal with the pain. As the years continued to pass I began to see an old looking man looking back at me in the mirror. My mother died, my sister Lauri died and my uncle Gary died—and I began to change. Reality started to kick in and I realized that if I didn't change I was going to die—alone in prison. So I decided to try something new. I turned to a few men, who today I am grateful to call my friends, and asked for help. Eric N., Will N., Shawn F., Chris J.

Each of them provided me with genuine love and guidance as I began to honestly work the program and learn a new way of life that I never dreamed possible. The more I worked the steps, the more they started making sense and the more my life changed for the better. Rob R. talked me into doing service work and the personal blessings I've received as a result are priceless. Today, after 29 years 25 days I am finally going home a free man and there are no words to express my gratitude to the N.A. program and the Hole In The Wall Group. When I say going home a free man I mean, free from the internal demons that fed my disease for so many years. I'm free from the prison inside my head and heart, that's what allows me to believe I can live free and clean for the rest of my life. Thank you so much to all of the men and women who helped me get to where I am. I love you and will never forget you. You're going home next Will. Stay focused my friend. Brandon & Ricky—I'm proud of you guys keep coming back and stay involved. To the newcomers, if you're in one of our meetings then you're onto something real good. All you've got to do is keep coming back, the miracle will happen. To all of our outside members, old and new, thank you so much for your unwavering support. We couldn't do what we do without you. And last, but
certainly not least, thank you Kenny H. for being there to help me along as I stumbled through learning my position of service to the club. You have a lot of good insight and I wish you well on your journey.

The Hole In The Wall will always be my home group and I am forever grateful to have shared in our recovery together.

Your friend & brother & ex-president, grateful to have served,

Ricky T.

Letter to the Group

Dear Hole In The Wall Group,

Hi, my name is Sherri, I am a meth addict two days ago I celebrated 4-years off of meth, thanks to my higher power and now thanks to N.A.

I wrote you guys in search of some information that you immediately sent to me, thank you so very much. I was able to contact World Headquarters and we the sisters of R.T.U. are starting our own N.A. group, finally.

I myself will only be incarcerated another 10-months, but what I am starting and leaving behind will be of much benefit to many women.

Thank you so much for your help with this venture and, we enjoyed the Newsletters, so please send us more when we get ours started we will also share.

Thank you,

Sherri B. R.T.U. Quincy, FL
Secretary

Summer time is here and as the song goes the living is easy. Softball season is in full swing and this place is softball crazy. It’s good clean fun and I love to participate. I like the p.m. runner’s turnout at noon time too. The reason I mention this is if I was still in active addiction and using none of these opportunities would be available to me as well as a host of others. These are only of couple examples of what I would miss, drugs lull me into a stupor and a rut that robs me of wonderful life experiences.

Today I am free of the chains that once had me bound and I can enjoy life even in prison. The NA way has given me back my life to be happy, joyful and free. We open our doors to other addicts, hoping that they can find what we have found. But we know that only those who have a desire to stop using and want what we have to offer will join us in our new way of life. Have a great summer be well, be safe and take good care.

Faithfully,

Rob R.
GSR Notes

Hello and greetings to all. Hope this newsletter find you all in great health and spirits. Our NA Hole in the Wall Group here at O.S.P. is very strong and refreshing. I wish everyone could attend the meetings and feel the energy of change. Our message we carry; rings loud and clear. It is very rewarding to be part of the solution and not the problem. Working the steps reading the books and sharing the message of recovery makes life great even while we are incarcerated. For those of you here waiting to get into our meetings please be patient. It’s not the group because we want everyone to come and feel the experience. The administration has limits on the people allowed to attend. So as soon as a spot is available we will get you in as soon as we can. Remember it only takes two to make a meeting so when you see one of us introduce yourself so we can talk.

All you outsider people interested in NA we would love to see some new faces and hear your stories of how it has worked for you. Thanks for the continuing support from our outside members that make those long drives here and share their stories and experiences. We thank you and send our love and respects. Never forget there is so much more to life than these places or the lifestyles that always lead us here or worst. You and yours deserve more... Hope to see you all soon.

In Service,

Eric N.
Chair Person

Fear Everything And Run, e.g., FEAR, that was the creed I lived by in my addiction. I buried my feelings and emotions and lived in my own altered sense of reality. There was no pain, guilt, remorse, shame, grief, loneliness also, no love, friendship, honesty, kindness, hope, enjoyment or sense of wonder. Even after I quit using I still could not live Life on Life’s terms, I didn’t know how, I was an emotional cripple, so I lived in isolation.

It wasn’t until I became involved in recovery that I replaced FEAR with a belief in the N.A. fellowship, the Twelve Steps and a Higher Power. I have regained those feelings and emotions so long buried and learned how to live with them, enjoying the good and dealing with the bad, no longer having to run away, instead living Life on Life’s terms. Now I have a new creed, Face Everything And Recover.

Respects
LeRoy W. AKA Critter

Letter to the Group

Dear Hole In The Wall Group,

I’ve been moved to the address above. Please keep sending me The Hole In The Wall Newsletter. I get out in five months and will be going into a drug program. I hope I can keep getting the newsletter there too! I started this journey of clean and sober living there at OSP in 1989. You guys were there then too. It’s been hard but I’m still alive. I don’t want to lose being in touch with my home group again and won’t through the newsletter.

Sincerely,
Danny P.

P.S. I’ve been clean since 11-11-05. I will always remember my start with you guys there.
Letter to the Group

Hello, Hole in the Wall Group,

My hat is off to you Gene, congratulations! Forty-five years is an astronomical number to me at this stage of my recovery. Gene, you are the hope, strength and willingness of this program.

I got to say, I can relate with pretty much all the articles in the last issue of The Hole In The Wall Newsletter. I have a romance sometimes with my program. I mean I read my Just For Today daily and take an inventory of my part in those pesky issues that inevitable pop up. When I am sick. I have to be diligent in my recovery to enable the honeymoon to last. Happy thoughts, I'm grateful to be at Deschutes camp, no bars, willing to listen, watch, and be active in my program is a chore.

But if the group were not there for me, then recovery would be much harder.

The new comer gives me the want, need to share my suffering and my happiness of this 12 Step Program, it works. Willingness to look at myself is pretty hard especially when others point out my shortcomings. I embrace these moments.

Anyway, I'm rambling. My point is thank you for the Hole in the Wall Group Newsletter and for thinking of me. I'm grateful for your support and love. I'm out in the middle of the Deschutes forest living in a tent, cooking for 110 guys and staff.

To the newcomers welcome! Look around there is a lot of good men getting better. The program works if you work it.

Just for today I will have faith in someone who believes in my new way of life.

Keep the faith!

Your brother in NA,
Regi R.
Secretary

Hello to everyone. My name is Will and I am an Addict. I hope this newsletter finds everyone in good spirits.

One of the things that I hear most often when someone, who is not in recovery, speaks about possibly seeking recovery is that I don’t believe in God and this is a religious based program. My response is then; this program is spiritual in nature and not religious based. As many of us know the word, God, in context with the 12 Step Program, has many meanings to many individuals. Let me explain how I came to understand my Higher Power.

When I first arrived to NA, I too had a problem with the word God being tossed around as if this were a religious based program. However, as I was quick to learn, a God of my understanding, or my Higher Power if you will, could literally mean anything. In the Narcotic Anonymous Step Working Guide it says, if the word “God” means the power of the program, these guidelines fit. If the word “God” means the spiritual principles of the program, these guidelines fit. If we understand, the Word “God” to mean a personal power or being with which we can communicate, these guidelines fit. Consequently, in my earliest stage of recovery my Higher Power was the group. To this day, all my brothers and sisters in recovery remain the most important aspect of my program.

Nowadays I find myself praying for guidance and the addict who still suffers. I ask for nothing personal except for the ability to do the right thing, for the right reasons so that everyone may benefit. Following this simple guideline I can only tell you that my life has taken on new meaning. I can’t remember feeling as content as I do now, even after being locked up for decades.

What I would say to the newcomer is that, once you admit you’re powerless over your addiction and that your life has become unmanageable, you are on a road to a new way of life. I cannot begin to tell you how many wonderful people and circumstances have affected my life due to the 12 Step Program of Narcotics Anonymous. So please, never allow a single word to deter you from what is rightfully yours, a life free from addiction.

Thank you, to the “Hole In The Wall Group” along with our sponsors and guests from the streets. I am proud to be living the dream.

Will N.
Letter to the Group

Dear Hole In The Wall Group,

Hey all you guys just wanted to touch base with the group after being gone six months.

I started my stay here at Powder River Correctional Facility by starting a non-treatment group of NA. It went along well till I started treatment, I proposed to the administration that non-treatment inmates be allowed to go to New Directions the treatment program meetings. Last week everything was finalized and non-treatment meetings are open to all inmates in the facility.

I learned perseverance from my stint as clerk in the office of The Hole In The Wall Group, the executive body, trusted servants and the meetings I enjoyed attending. Please send the group all my love and respect in recovery and wish them my best. Tell Chris J. he did a great job on the Newsletter and to keep up the good work! I want all the guys in the group to know I think of them often and use my experience, strength and hope everyday. The group taught me a lot about how to live a new way of life clean. Thank you all.

I will stay in touch with you all and when I get out I will do anything I can to help the group from outside the walls. Thanks again for the gift of recovery!

A friend in recovery and in life,

Brent G.

PS: Also started a book study group on Wednesday nights here at PRCF in honor of my home group The Hole In The Wall Group.
From The Editor

“Happy New Year”

Dear readers: Looking back on this year I am so grateful to be of service to all of you through the program of Narcotics Anonymous and this newsletter. It’s awesome to have this available for all that wish to read this publication, because this recovery stuff is really what makes it all possible for us.

The service I’m able to do through this Newsletter and being a grateful club member to the Hole In The Wall Group I have been given an understanding of just how important these types of groups are for the recovering addict and for you readers who find this newsletter therapeutic to their recovery. Through all this I have the privilege, of being of some help: “like it’s says, we can’t keep this gift of recovery without giving what we receive away, and this concept has been helpful to me in my recovery and hopefully in yours. I thank you, as well as my Higher Power by allowing me to be of service to you in this way, it has really brought to light things that I wouldn’t necessarily see without being able to participate in this newsletter and without you readers. You have been my miracle respectfully.

Grateful to be of service
Chris J.

Treasurer Report

Welcome to all you newcomers. I’m thankful to and for the unity of all our members. The holidays for some people can be rough and stressful being away from family members and others loved ones. I’ve found that one of the benefits of NA and our group is the support of each other. I hope that anyone of us who is having difficulties can feel safe enough to ask for a shoulder to lean on. We all have at least one thing in common; we are addicts suffering from a disease. I respectfully send out my heartfelt best wishes to all of you. Tis the season for giving don’t forget to donate.

Seasons Greetings
Eric O
GSR Notes

Well Happy New Year, too all. Hope that everyone’s Holidays went well and everyone got the things they wanted. Most important the thing we need is our loving fellowship and the encouragement of other people in recovery. I believe that 2008 has lots of miracles waiting for us all. Miracles you say... Yes, miracles, when another addict finds our program of recovery and new way of life. It truly is a miracle to me because I never believed there was a life without drugs. I have found that there is a life, and I am much happier with out them and the program of Narcotics Anonymous in my life. Sounds strange I am sure to most people who have not yet experienced the miracle and self-pride by staying clean, working the steps, applying the principles in all my affairs, sharing the message and doing service work. Today I am clean, crime free, honest, and happy. Having my sanity back and purpose in my life. Today I have a life a real life, even though I am incarcerated and have been for this time since 12-13-96. I am free in my heart soul and mind. I am able to be me without drugs. I am still Eric just a better version. I look forward to being able to share that Eric with my family and friends in the community some day. Until that day I will continue to carry the message here and wherever I am. There is so much more to life than these places or the life-style that always leads us here. There is a life after drug abuse. We all deserve that life. So do our families and communities. So yes 2008 is another year of miracles. So help us all spread the miracle of recovery and carry the message to the addict who still suffers.

In Service,
Eric N.
Editor's Note

The Hole In Wall Group’s 20th Anniversary is in June. This is really a big deal for us. We have speaker coming in from World Services to share in this enormous 20th Anniversary.

I hope these first few months of 2008 have brought joy and happiness through the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. If you haven’t felt the true joy of this program yet, you must be a newcomer and if this is the case don’t give up hope! If you stick with it and participate in the steps, the traditions, listen, and share in meetings even just a little you will see N.A. is the one place that won’t let you down. Here there is hope and strength with one addict helping another addict. I for one found this is the one place that won’t let you down. The meeting places truly help you become a success story not a statistic.

I believe this program lives and breathes in addicts when their lives have become unmanageable and life seems unfair. Admitting powerlessness over our addiction is the key to recovery. Once we searched fearlessly and turn our will over to the care of God, as we understand Him then we are truly on our way to recovery. In recovery, the addict becomes an up right, spiritual, success story, that is now, that loving father or mother, loving husband or wife, son or daughter, employer or employee, baseball coach, basketball coach, or football coach to their children, this is what it is all about, this is living. Once unmanageable now managing quite well, showing up to; once always missed, family events, like picnics, now is in attendance bright eyed and happy, the important stuff, when for so long that just did not seem possible. Today in and with the help of this program if you are like me you have found it is now possible. It is possible! So fellow N.A. brothers and sisters young and old don’t give up hope, don’t give up before the miracle happens.

Again we are looking for your story. We believe in sharing the message not the disease. If you have a poem or a story or would just like to share how our newsletter has made a difference in your recovery; and would like to see it in our Newsletter, you know where to find us.

Grateful to be of service

Chris J.
Treasurer

As most of you know Jeston H., left on June 16, 2012 to go to a minimum facility to finish his time. He will be missed very much by all of us. Jeston set a great example of a man in recovery and living a sober life.

As I transition into the treasurer’s position, I’m excited. I’m stepping into this position with humility and a heart to serve my fellow brothers that are seeking a new way of life through NA. I know what it’s like to live life clean and sober, and I know what it’s like to live life in addiction. I greatly prefer the clean and sober life. And to know the significant difference in my life due to God and NA, it’s given me a passion to show others what I’ve learned. Maybe the next man may receive the peace, freedom and joy I’ve experienced. My heart’s desire is to see everyone free from the darkness of addiction and find the light in recovery. If you put your whole heart into this great program you will find a new way of living. Many others and me are living examples. For an alcoholic and drug addict like me to have over 10 years clean is nothing short of a miracle, and the next miracle is waiting for you, if you want it.

As most of us know the 7th Tradition states that “Every NA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.” So other words our generous donations keep the NA program afloat in OSP. “The Hole In The Wall Group” has changed many lives and was hoping to see many more changed by donating a couple bucks here and there; it plays a part in that change.

As one of your trusted servants, I thank you for allowing me and trusting me to be your NA Hole In The Wall Group Treasurer. Thank You.

Sincerely,
Brad B.
Secretary

Thank you for electing me Secretary of the Hole In The Wall Group Of Narcotics Anonymous; it is an honor and a privilege to be of service to you the members and to the group as a whole.
I am so grateful for the N.A. Program; it has given me my life back; I have a newfound humility and a realistic view of myself and my place in the world. Rediscovering Spiritual Principles that I had buried under layers of bitterness and hate. Now I am growing spiritually and strengthening the capability to choose spiritual principles over character defects.
N. A. has been a life-altering experience that has allowed me to find a new level of freedom in my life; each day is no longer just an exercise in survival but now is something precious. I'm far from perfect and will never be perfect, as my friend Will used to say, "I'm a work in progress."

Thank you
Grateful to be of service
LeRoy W.

Anonymity

The spiritual foundation of Narcotics Anonymous is *Anonymity*. The Hole in the Wall Group takes this very seriously. We not only take this seriously, the Hole in the Wall Group has an excellent history with this Tradition. *Whatever is said in the meetings and classes stays in the meetings and classes*. We do not Gossip or Speak outside of the meetings and classes. Rest assured of that.

—From our introductory literature
Chair Person

My name is Jack. I was voted in as your chairperson and I appreciate the chance to serve our NA fellowship.

Recently the NA program became more real to me. I was talking to my eldest son, whom I had not spoke to for several years. As we spoke I mentioned I was becoming more involved in the NA group. I told him how someone had said in a meeting that the biggest amends we could make to the people we have harmed was to change the way we live our lives into something we can be proud of. This opened the conversation for him to tell me about some of the hurt feelings and pain he had been carrying around in his heart since he was a teenager. He went on to tell me he had forgiven me for all the pain I had caused him. This was quite an emotional and uplifting moment for me. It made the power of the NA program very real to me. I can say the program works. Thanks again for allowing me to be of service.

Love and Respects,

Jack B.
Letter to the Group,

Dear Chris (and the Hole in the Wall Group),
I hope that you all had a good thanksgiving. I apologize for not writing sooner. Things have been crazy out here. When I left in June, I had been told by my PO that I was going to Bridges to Change. I was very hesitant at first (which I'm sure some of you remember) but after having some advice given to me through you guys, I realized that it might be the best thing for me. And now that I have done it, I can guarantee you that it was truly the best choice for me to have made.

In less than a month, I found a job working at a Costco resale company and it's working out really well. After about three months, I graduated from the Bridges program and amazingly enough I received a job offer from the Director of Bridges to Change to be a mentor after I get off of paper. I was shocked and astonished by this. Coming from where I have been, to where I am now, and for people to be able to see for themselves that I am a different person, makes me feel good. I don't have to try and convince anyone that I am doing well, because they just know.

It's truly amazing and a blessing; one to which I owe a debt of gratitude to all of the members of the Hole in the Wall Group at OSP. Without your guidance and without the outlet in which our meetings provided an environment for me to feel free to express what weighed heavily on my heart, I would not be the person I am today. Thank you from the bottom of my heart. I wish you all the best, keep heads up, keep your recovery first in your life, and you can do anything that you set your mind to.

Sincerely,

Your friend and fellow addict,
Sean V. W.
I feel honored and privileged to be able to serve as the vice president of our Hole in the Wall Group. In my addiction I was always a taker. TAKE, TAKE, TAKE. Take from family, friends and acquaintances with no thought to give . . . time, attention or otherwise. I had a self-centered selfish mindset I used to justify my instant gratification by any means. It is great to be able to finally give back freely with no thought or expectation of anything in return.

I didn’t get it right the first time I came to NA, or prison for that matter. My life has been a revolving door. In and out of both the program and the penitentiary. It has been a life-long journey fraught with the same simple and selfish mistakes. I’m just learning to not make the same ones again and to change the thoughts and feelings that allow those actions to happen. I am definitely a work in progress and have ample room for growth. With the help of the group, friends in recovery, literature and actively working a program I can be a success, a winner, a champion to my dreams and goals.

I encourage you to take a look inside yourself and to work on and change those flaws and defects that keep you stuck in your own little prison, inside your heart and mind. Spend your time wisely and constructively so that you may be a better father, friend, brother and son: a better man than you have been.

Recovery is an action, not a concept. It takes work and dedication and is worth the reward.

I am your grateful servant in recovery I am always here for you if and when you need me, and even if you don’t.

Grateful to Serve
Sam H.
Vice President

I don’t always like what I see staring back at me in the mirror. Some things I can change, some I cannot. I cannot change my outsides, other than to reflect what’s going on inside. My first reaction to any given circumstance usually isn’t the best and sometimes comes with regrets. Rather than continuing the same behaviors and expecting different results I choose to analyze my thoughts and feelings looking deeper than the surface to the bottom of a once empty pit. I’m working to fill myself with characteristics and traits, values and morals, as well as actions of the man I want to be. I want to replace my impulsiveness with patience, my anger with happiness, my defensiveness with receptiveness and lastly my jealousy with confidence and security in who and what I am.

I’m looking at and working my Seventh Step. I see where I need to recognize my shortcomings before I can ask to have them removed. It’s about action and momentum. Doing. The time for just being what I once was is past and I have to be willing to work hard for what I need to attain spiritually and mentally.

As I talk with you my friends in recovery I see where my defects are my thoughts and my shortcomings are how I act and how I do to my thinking. My walls and barriers to change should be torn down and rebuilt to facilitate growth. I feel that in working the steps leading up to this one I have matured more than I had in all of my prior incarcerations combined. I’m learning what I need to do for myself to become whole. What I need to change, what I can keep, and where I can be better. I have to recognize it when I see it and decide what to do about changing myself and what keeps me sick and stuck in my old mentality.

I encourage you all to dig deep and uncover the truth, however painful and unbearable. Learn to live and grow instead of just surviving as you’ve always done. Give it some thought. You deserve more, as do I.

As always, it’s a pleasure being of service to you, the Hole in the Wall Group and the NA community as a whole. I look forward to continuing this journey I am on.

Everything,  
Sam H.  
Assistant,  
The Hole in the Wall Group
From the Editor

Greetings Hole in the Wall Members, friends and readers throughout the country. I hope the New Year is full of hope and Recovery for each of you.

This season I am reading A Christmas Carol, by Charles Dickens. For most people the story is an exhortation to be kind and generous to the needy. But the story was not about the needy. It was about Scrooge. From my very first reading I have always seen something else. I saw a story about a second chance, and about redemption. What I saw was the intransigent, Self-Reliant Scrooge being brought back, first to himself, then to his friends and family, and finally to God by the succession of the spirits. For me the story was never about the material giving. It was always about reconciliation and redemption.

Most of us will not be visited by three spirits, though our lives will contain moments just as profound. Most people will get a second chance to live life the way they were meant to. The lesson of A Christmas Carol must be to not miss those moments, and to be ready for that second chance.

Thank you all for reading my thoughts. Bless you all, every one, and peace and hope to people of goodwill.

Grateful to be of service

Lee K.
We Do Recover

The following letter is from LeRoy W., AKA Critter. He is a former President of our Group, served 26 years at OSP, and was released on September 13, 2013.

Hello to my fellow NA Hole in the Wall Member, and all the other people I left behind. You are missed but never forgotten. It's been a great and easy transition to this world of freedom and choices. The foundation I laid down before I left OSP has made this great gift of freedom exiting and wonderful adventure! I have been accepted and shown much kindness, understanding and love. Leaving prison after so many years was a scary thing until I found out that I had an NA family out here just waiting to embrace and welcome me. I did over 100 meetings in my first 40 days and I try to make at least one meeting a day now that I'm out.

I'm living in clean and sober housing (Bridges to Change). I do a lot of walking and enjoy the simple things that life has to offer out here. One of them is my Friday night dinner date. After our meeting a bunch of us go out dinner. Gracie, who is 4 years old sits next to me and I get to cater to her every whim. "Take green things out of my soup Critter," "Cut up my meat Critter." Then, when she looks up at me and smiles and tells me "Thank You Critter," my heart just melts and all that prison crap disappears.

Hey, let a puppy lick your face, hold a baby and listen to him laugh, walk in a straight line for miles without running into a big grey wall. It's the little things that are so important; I'm just taking life easy. The big things will come in their own time. I'm in no rush. Hey, I lived in a bathroom for 25 years, how much do I really need? What I'm trying to say is start to set up your foundation. Talk to the people who are coming in to the meetings from the outside. If you are going to a town they are not from, get a list of the meetings there and write to them. Introduce yourself and start a relationship with that group now. When you get out you'll have people who will be there to help, people who you can call on when things become overwhelming, as they will.
There are so many choices to make out here, and we aren't used to doing that. Sometimes it is nice to have somebody who can lend a hand and give some sound advice. It could make the difference of enjoying what life has to offer out here, or going back to prison and being one of those people out on the yard talking about how hard it is out here.

Well my fellow NA brothers, I miss you all and there will always be a piece of my heart in there for those of you left behind.

With Much Respect and Love,
LeRoy W. (AKA Critter)
November 18, 2013

Treasurer

Gentlemen, many (if not all) of you know who I am and how I carry myself within this institution. As Treasurer my same respectful and upbeat attitude is what I'm going to bring, to this position. This is something you can expect and/or count on. We all have hard work to do and a long journey to travel in regards to our sobriety. As we continue to help one another in this process, we will get there and the finished product will be exactly what it is supposed to be. So Let's Go Team NA!!

Your Treasurer,
Isaac B.
Chairperson

My name is David and I am an addict. I am the Hole in the Wall NA Chairperson. I was appointed to the position by the executive body and approved by the group. I want to thank you all for this appointment. Congratulations to Jack B. for his ascension to Secretary. I also wish to congratulate Ike, our new Treasurer. I look forward to working with Ike, Jack B., Sam H. our Vice President, Eric N. our GSR, and of course, our Outside GSR Steve B., to bring the message of recovery to each of you, either in the group setting or on a one on one basis. Serving the addict that still suffers is our motive. Overcoming our disease is our objective.

I will do my best to serve you. We cannot do this alone. If you would like to see something brought up to the group please bring it to my attention and I'll do my best to fulfill your request.

Again, thank you for this appointment and I am honored by your trust in me.

Respectfully,
David P.
Chairperson,
The Hole in the Wall Group
Secretary

I have liked the past better than the present or the hopes of the future.

Everybody has a need for their past. Sometimes it pulls harder on me than my future. There have been times when I have fallen and betrayed my future with my past. My low self-esteem was beaten into me by the hard angry fists of my grandfather. As I continue to spend time in the rooms of recovery, I hear so many stories that sound like mine. I have lived a life feeling "not enough": not good enough, not fast enough, and not quiet enough. It often seems that no matter how much work I do on looking at my past and what has motivated many of my choices. I can get to feel pretty good, but it can take only a few critical words to have that feeling of not enough come back full force. An occasional halfhearted gesture of doing something for yourself will not be enough to affect the entrenched ways of thinking, feeling and relating. Through habit alone they would reassert themselves without remedial input.

So I find in the rooms of Recovery the place of my redemption, the road to a future that I can find hope and peace, a chance to be part of my own life instead of being run over by it. There is no trap so deadly as the one you set for yourself.

Jack B.
President,
The Hole in the Wall Group
Greetings
I hope everyone’s new year has started out well. Mine has been great. I was blessed with a parole date when I saw the Parole Board a couple of weeks ago. I have several more years left and lots of work to do.

I believe the reason I was paroled is because of my Higher Power, who I call God, Narcotics Anonymous, and my family and support group. Thank you all so much for your support, letters, love, encouragement and more. You all know who you are... I would name you all but our editor says I take up too much space already. I could not have done it without you all. Thank you again.

My story is like so many others. I am an addict. I hurt and ruined so many lives, yet God, this program, working the steps, being of service to others, reading the literature, and going to meetings has changed me.

It doesn’t happen over night and I grow each day. Today I am free. I never have to use drugs again or hurt anyone because I have been relieved of the obsession and compulsion to use. Its starts with a choice each day, to do the next right thing, don’t use no matter what, prayer, reading “Just For Today” and talking to someone in our program. I am truly blessed! There is a Recovery Revolution happening and I am part of it. So are you! Life does get better; sometimes it takes time, then some more time. There is so much more to life than these places or the lifestyles that always lead us here. Don’t give up before the miracle happens. Thank you all for helping me change my life and being of service. N.A. has given me my life back, a real life. It can do the same for you as it has for sooo many others. Hope to see you at a meeting soon.

In service,

Eric N.

Hole in the Wall Group GSR
We Do Recover!

Letter to Group

Greetings everyone! How nice it is here in the sunny Bahamas! Ha Ha! Just kidding. Hope all is going well for everyone! As time goes on, I hope to be able to come back in and visit with all of you. I am adjusting well out here in Medford. I miss all of you (not enough to be back wearing blue)!

You know, the most important results of the Ninth Step will be found within ourselves. The Ninth Step teaches us a great deal about humility, love, selflessness, and forgiveness. As we begin to heal from our addiction, we will find that we no longer have to live with as many regrets. As we grow spiritually we will find that we are truly gaining a new level of freedom in our lives. Our past is just that; the past. We must put it behind us so that it no longer hovers on the edge of our thoughts, waiting for a chance to haunt our present.

Memories of the past no longer hold us back, and new possibilities appear. We are free to go in directions we never considered before. We are free to dream and to pursue the fulfillment of our dreams. Our lives stretch out before us like a limitless horizon. We may stumble from time to time, but the key to our recovery is to pick ourselves up and keep walking forward. Keep strong in your recovery and working the steps!

Until Then,

Walter F.

The Hole in the Wall Group
"One Addict Helping Another"

The Hole in the Wall Group
at
Oregon State
Penitentiary
Something Real . . .

This Collection is the real life stories of dozens of our members and friends. Some accounts are surprising, even shocking. Many are all too familiar. All of them evince the sentiment and passion that characterize the Spirit of our Group.

The Hole in the Wall Group