

# A newsletter of the Autonomous Region of Narcotics Anonymous.

someone in NA who believes in me

and wants to help me in my recovery

The Autonomous Region of Narcotics Anonymous is comprised of groups & individual members who have come together to support each other in carrying the message in their local communities. Regardless of literature preferences, location or meeting formats.

## In this issue:

- Members Speak
  - Tradition Six
  - A Perspective on Service
  - Control vs. Faith

## Our members speak

### Tradition Six

I often pondered why Narcotics Anonymous could not be associated with larger non-profit organizations. Surely the Catholic Church has a global network that could help get the message to the still suffering addict. Or why could we not align ourselves with treatment centers? Surely they want to help addicts get clean and stay clean. It's not until I got a better understanding of NA, did I realize that these ideas would never work.

We read it at every meeting. Yet, they're just words to me. I'm not really conscious of the power behind the language. What is Narcotics Anonymous? N.A. is a non-

*(Continued on page Two)*

This is our seventh issue of this monthly newsletter. Our intention is for this newsletter to serve as a vehicle to communicate experience, strength and hope in recovery among the members and groups of ARNA. We welcome your input into this newsletter. Please contact us at [newsletter@arna.world](mailto:newsletter@arna.world).

Please send anything you would like to share with other members and groups of ARNA, including - personal experience, strength and hope in recovery; what becoming a part of ARNA has meant for you and your group; challenges and successes you have experienced in becoming a member of ARNA; anything else you would like to communicate with other members and groups of ARNA.

This is your newsletter. We will do our best to serve you by delivering an updated issue regularly, editing your input into an easily readable format, to facilitate effective communication between the groups and members of ARNA. We will also welcome any ideas you may have to improve the quality and effectiveness of this newsletter.

## Our members speak

### A Perspective on Service

It matters not what services your group may avail itself of. I am a member of Narcotics Anonymous and will take my seat in any room hosting a meeting of this Fellowship, for the purpose of recovery. The primary purpose is to share our experience, strength and hope so that any addict seeking recovery may find it.

My recovery is attributable to a conscious relationship with my Higher Power, which was attained and maintained through guidance from my sponsors and a home group uti-

*(Continued on page Four)*



(Continued from page One) **Tradition Six**

profit fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. We are recovered addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean (Grey Book Page 15). The key takeaways from this I got is that we're here for only one thing and that's to help one another. An addict helping another addict.

If we were to extend our hand to other organizations, even with good intention, it could possibly divert us from our one primary purpose.

The second takeaway I like from this is that I am a recovered addict. I'm not recovering - I was sick, and now I've found a solution for my malady and I have recovered. Now to stay recovered I have to keep working a program, a part of which is reaching out and helping a fellow addict. The 12th step is very much connected to the 6th tradition. By keeping the program simple and straightforward I can work my steps and continue to recover. The minute I bring in outside forces it complicates matters, and possibly puts my fellowship in danger.

Now the second half of the 6th tradition – lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose. These words have particular meaning to me. First off, what does the word lest mean? Lest-with the intention of preventing (something undesirable). The three words following it are especially dangerous to me—money, property, and prestige. In my active addiction I

*(Continued on page Three)*

(Continued from page Two) Tradition Six

was involved in the underworld of society. To make a long story short, getting off the drugs was the easy part - letting go of the lifestyle of fast money, cars, and power was the hard part. In fact, my addiction was fueled by the last three words of the 6th tradition. Drugs played a much smaller role.

Now I touched upon why it's not safe for NA to be allied with other organizations, but what about treatment centers? I have had the pleasure of being able to find recovery in India. I'm eternally grateful to the treatment center that allowed me to accept changing my way of life. I lived in a treatment center for 14 months - 4 months as a patient and 8 months as a halfway house resident. Needless to say, I have hundreds of hours working with addicts in treatment.

Why then, can't NA be associated with treatment centers? Having worked with many treatment centers in India, although their intentions may be solid, *their primary purpose is to make money.* I

have witnessed treatment centers charging tenfold the actual price for NA literature. At the end of the day, they do not care if their patients recover - it's just a business to them. Now, I'm certain there are exceptions to the rule, but we as a fellowship cannot be associated with businesses - because then *the primary purpose becomes money.*

I have spoken to many old timers who were around in the early days of NA. Some were forced by the judicial systems to attend AA meetings and did not recognize NA as a fellowship that could help you recover. Those same old timers helped build an image of NA as a fellowship that works, and now NA is recognized around the world by many governments. Many members dedicated their lives to NA, and it is up to us to maintain its image by not endorsing, financing, or lending the NA name to any related facilities or outside enterprises.

## ARNA

### Autonomous Region of Narcotics Anonymous Group Autonomy Workshop

Saturday • June 19th • 11:00am PDT

12pm MDT | 1pm CDT | 2pm EDT | 6pm UTC | 7pm BST

#### The Written by Addicts for Addicts Group

Okanagan Group

Back to the Grey Group

Seeking Traditional Solutions Group

We will have 4 presentations from home groups on the importance of group autonomy and how they fulfill the primary purpose of carrying a message.

Learn more at <https://arna.world> \*

\* NA is not affiliated with Zoom

ZOOM ID:

**894 0925 4184**

PASSCODE:

**281927**

(Continued from page Two)

lizing the 12 steps and 12 traditions. My understanding of the traditions is rather simple - NA is a Spiritual Fellowship which freely shares Experience, Strength and Hope. All else is not NA.

NA is the *spirit of recovery* we share as we put principle into action. We find hope and faith in a Higher Power, we find strength and humility in surrender to our Higher Power. As we clean up our wreckage and learn how to live our lives aligned with spiritual principle, we have the responsibility of “*Each One Teach One*” – we pass it on to the next addict, freely and with love, as it was given to us. Recovery is not a passive process - we *must* carry this message in how we live, and in how we are of service to the still suffering addict.

Service takes many forms. Some groups may host meetings. Others may support an H&I meeting at a local institution. Others may create space for collaborative writing of recovery literature. Still others may print or distribute literature. Just as many of us had varied experiences that led us to NA, there are many different ways for us be in service, and to best use the time, talents and treasure we have been gifted with in recovery. It is the fellowship of our group and the spirit of service that keeps us growing along spiritual lines.

As is stated in our Gray Book, a group is where two or more addicts meet together for the purpose of recovery. I try not to concern myself with what others in a service structure are or are not doing. They cannot steal what they do not own - our experience, strength and hope. The reality is that we have our recovery and we share it freely.

We are a program of attraction, not promotion. We share freely with any addict seeking recovery as it was shared with us. If what is working for those who choose to align with a specific service structure and its rules – blessings, keep doing it. Recovery for me is a working relationship with a Higher Power that works in my life, which I found through the experience of the spiritual principles outlined in the 12 steps and 12 traditions, and maintain by living in alignment with these principles to the best of my ability.

Historical, and other group-produced literature such as the Gray Book and Gray Book Reflections may be used freely. Those who were involved with its creation understood that it

(Continued on page Five)

*(Continued from page Four)*

wasn't about making a profit – any way that it can be freely given away to help another addict recover is embraced and celebrated by those who I choose to align myself with.

As stated in the Gray book, we work in cooperation with other groups and fellowships - spiritual principles are never in conflict. For those who choose to do so, render unto NAWS what is NAWS - the professionally written literature. Let them have it. If it works for you, great. As for me, I'll take what was given freely, and I will freely give it away. That's the only way I can keep it.

## Our members speak

### Control vs. Faith

One of the steps that I tend to follow the least is the third step. Upon entering recovery, I instantly sought connection with my Higher Power. I was plagued with fear- fear of failure, fear of rejection, fear of the future. It took me a few years to realize that my personal fears revolve around the need to control my life. Life should go exactly how I want it to.

The third step involves turning my will and life over to my Higher Power - not an easy thing to ask of an addict! Two of the spiritual principles involved in taking this step are surrender and faith. I think the two go hand in hand. I cannot have faith until I am willing to surrender to my Higher Power's will for me.

Initially the fear was, what if God will for me is to have a terrible life? What if I can't get the job I want, or be in a relationship with the person I want? There was a voice in my head that said to me that those things wouldn't happen, that God will make sure I get to where I need to go. To this day I'm not sure if that was my own thought or if it was a thought from my Higher Power.

Lo and behold, a few years into recovery, I am lucky enough to have the material comforts I desired. I realized early on in recovery that if I align my will with God's will, I cannot go wrong. I do not know where this faith came from. A large part of it had to do with continuous contact with the fellowship, and being of service. I tried to make the program and my Higher Power a central part of my life. I believe that it still is to this day.

Having had the privilege of attending Narcotics Anonymous meetings around the world, I know I have a place where I can be myself wherever I go. To this very day, I have a lot of fear. Often times, they are the same fears I entered the fellowship with. The only difference is that they are to a much lesser degree, and today I have the tools to deal with them.

Gratitude and faith are two parts of the program that I believed no one can give you. They have to come from within. I often joked with members "Are you guys selling any gratitude? Because I don't seem to have any". These are two fundamental principles to my recovery. I lacked in these, and the direction I was given was to pray for them. I thought it was insane to pray to God for him to give me faith in him. But once again, God came through for me. Life became more manageable.

Recently, I've entered into a serious relationship. It is the first relationship in which I've been rigorously honest and non-manipulative. It's also shown me how selfish I really am. It's opened my eyes to many defects I was unaware of. I look at all these experiences as gifts from my higher power. He is allowing me to enter a new stage of my recovery where I can start to work on some deeper shortcomings. One of the biggest fears to overcome is trying to understand if this person is right for me and if we will make it in the long term. I love to spot defects in others and take their inventories. So, the more I get to know this person the more faults I see. And these faults could interfere with my idea of a perfect future. One that only benefits me.

The self-centered nature of the disease is a recurring theme in my recovery. At this point, anytime I have these negative thoughts, I invite my Higher Power into my relationship. I pray for the faith to follow God's will. I know that my higher power put this person in my life for a reason. The outcome of the relationship is not in my hands. So, I have decided to focus on the aspects that are in my control, which are mainly my behavior and actions. Today, because of the program, I have faith that my Higher Power will watch over me and get me through any challenge as long as I maintain my principles, and not run my self-will.