
The New/Old

NAWay

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Greetings! I hope everyone is staying warm in these wintery months!

Just a reminder of the upcoming 12 Step Retreat in East Liverpool, Ohio. It is being held February 18, 19, and 20th. It all begins on Friday around 7 PM. The workshops are awesome as we break into small groups to discuss the Steps, everyone gets a chance to share, hope to see you there! If you need a flyer please send us an email at: asisfna@yahoo.com. —*Ed*

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The Meeting Before the Meeting

I recently hit the road with my favorite newcomers and headed south to a meeting just 94 miles from my home. As we traveled down the highway we all shared our experience, strength and hope with each other. The clean time in our car ranged from one week clean to 27 years clean.

One of the newcomers brought lunch for the 4 of us and it was that lunch that brought back the memories of my early days in NA. While eating my bologna sandwich I shared about not having money and how we all use to pack lunches, coolers and drinks and pile in a car to head to a convention. Then we literally piled into a room, sometimes 8 or 10 addicts to one hotel room. But we were there, no matter what, the lack of funds did not stop us, we made it work. Others in the car shared about their probation and treatment experiences; we genuinely listened to each other.

We took a break from sharing and listened to a CD of an addict who got clean in 1972, wow, what a message. I am always amazed at the folks who got clean in the 70s, they really had to go to any length, they had very little literature and traveled miles for meetings. The message was a bit hard core, but none-the-less it was right on with the spiritual principles of NA. It was un-cut, honest, and yes there was some swearing. But it was powerful and it spoke to each and everyone of us. It gave me a great appreciation of those who came before me.

Eventually, we got to the meeting and met addicts we had never met before. I met many newcomers who were excited to hear a little bit about NA history, that always keeps me smiling. I love newcomers hungry for our old literature:) I also, met some wonderful new sponsorship family members. And while I am always excited to meet more of my NA sponsorship family, I must remember to remain inclusive and to welcome and greet everyone in the rooms.

We left that meeting and had another meeting at the local restaurant. I met up with one of my favorite old-timers, who has even more enthusiasm than myself, we are talking a live wire here. I just love her to death! And every time we get together we look into NA History, compare notes and talk about the exciting moments that we want to share with the world. It was a wonderful day, I couldn't have asked for anything more. My gratitude speaks...

I love what the Gray Book says about the old-timers and the newcomers: "In a sense the newcomer surrenders to the wisdom of those who have gone before, and those with time surrender to the spirit and vitality of the new." I am so grateful for those in my car that day, their spirit of recovery was ever present. The questions they asked about NA and its history, the concerns they had about replacement drugs and their desire to find a new way of life, helped me to stay clean another day.

*The circle of life will be complete when I can give
back to you what I have received.*

Practicing these Principles in all of our affairs

I was fortunate to attend a service “meeting” in Marion, NC a few weeks ago. Before leaving other members who were attending with me had received e-mails critical of the “personalities” of members who were helping to put this together. How sad, that members who would lay down their very recovery for the traditions, would violate the twelfth tradition in the name of “truth”. We all went anyway, and were so glad to have the experience. The conference itself was not the greatest or most productive event we had ever attended. What I “got” from it happened at the lunch and dinner breaks away from the event. I found other addicts who want the best for NA and have found our structural service lacking in direct reasonability back to the groups. Most of us saw the absence of tradition two at all levels of service. Some of us no longer participated beyond group level service. Others are heavily involved in all levels of service. Our common denominator was a desire to return to the twelve traditions, particularly direct reasonability in service for NA. It has been a long time since I spent much time with people who had different opinions and experience than me. It did not hurt me nor did it really change my beliefs in any way. It did remind me that NA is made up of many different individuals, with different experiences but with one goal, to carry the message to as many suffering addicts as possible. For this reason I am willing and ready to embrace the principals of the twelfth tradition. To actively seek solutions, work with others, and let God shine through our work as dictated by the groups of NA practicing the second tradition.

Attending this event has already produced benefits. Due in part to our renewed enthusiasm, my home group is on the verge of joining other groups in our geographical area to form a new ASC. News of what is going on has drawn the interest of older members and sparked a flame in a few newcomers. Friends, who also attended Marion, have received calls and question about what is happening in March. This event started out as a grass root movement and the momentum is amazing to watch.

One thing I have learned in recovery is: when our actions are right, the road is opened before us. Yes, there may be boulders to climb over and we may get a little hurt along the way, but faith will light the path. I think that is step three in action.



Something positive is happening in this fellowship and I will be in Wichita KS March 4, 5 and 6. Like we use to say “back in” dinosaur days”.... Be there or be square!

Group Conscience is Agreement

The ultimate authority in Narcotics Anonymous is the will of a loving god being expressed in a home group. Group Conscience has nothing to do with 'winners' and 'losers,' nothing to do with 'arguments' and 'campaigns' as one might suppose by watching an NA home group implement a vote. A loving god rejects the idea of power votes taken under the influence of maximum 'clean time.' It has nothing to do with majority rules.

Group conscience is simply a decision by a group of people who deeply care that every one of them has had the opportunity to express 'god's will' for the group, and who want each of those opinions to be present in the outcome. Every decision is based upon what WE as a group can agree. Imagine each of us quietly and respectfully discussing each idea on the table, and agreeing to follow through with those upon which each member of the group can agree, setting aside the 'others' to be considered at a later time? This is how a group gains 'one conscience.'

SERVICE: What It Means to Me

I became involved in service work the first day that I came to an N.A. meeting. The handful of people that I associated with at that time were very much involved in service; therefore I followed suit. When they went to a service meeting I tagged along, simply because I wanted to be exposed to as much N.A. as possible. At first it was confusing, but, I continued to go and I learned quickly to ask questions. I asked for, sent away for, and conned people out of anything in writing that had to do with N.A., and N.A. service, i.e., a service manual. an approval copy of the text, stories, unapproved literature, WSC minutes, P.1. and H.& I. handbooks, anything and everything. I learned quickly and became involved just as quickly. At sixty days clean I held two trusted servant positions which became very important to me. There came a point in my life soon after reaching the sixty day mark, that I started to feel. I didn't think that I would ever be able to live with those feelings and I wanted to run. Getting high became a very real way out. I sat in the middle of my living room floor one night with a bottle of barbiturates in one hand and my key tags in the other hand, thinking about what I was about to do. I thought about my involvement in service, those two trusted servant positions. It was the first time in my life that I had a feeling of worth. People had placed their trust in me and the gratitude I felt is something I cannot express in words. I threw the pills away.

I credit my involvement in service with playing a major role in my recovery that specific night and today. I have tried several times during my clean time to rationalize my way out of service, but I keep coming back. I know today that there is a reason for this and just recently I have accepted that reason. I need that involvement. Not for ego reasons, at least I don't believe so. It is a very real need for me. I need that feeling of worth. Today I am able to look at my assets and accept them and I honestly feel that I have something to give. Service work provides a medium for me just as a paint brush and canvas provide a medium for the artist.

I have a drive and desire to do what I can to help to assure that N.A. will be here in future years, for myself and for others. It's my dream. If I can do anything at all to contribute to making that dream come true, I am willing to do it.

Other people cared enough and were willing enough to assure that N.A. was here for me. I have that same willingness. Someone said to me the other day that I should not be looking for that feeling of worth from outside sources. To that person I would like to respond: I feel that finding a feeling of worth by being willing to extend my hand to another suffering addict is the best way for me. I am grateful for having been given the gift of life. The N.A. Program gave me that gift. Thank you N.A. You're special!

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Historical Corner

The N.A. Tree

The N.A. Tree, sub-titled the Service Structure of NA was the first guide written for our service structure. It was primarily written by one member, with its earliest beginnings dating back to 1974.

The First Edition of the N.A. Tree was approved and published for use within Narcotics Anonymous in 1975. It sold for \$2.00.

During our first World Service Conference (November 13, 1976) in Ventura, California, it was suggested that an ad-hoc committee be formed to review The N.A. Tree. This effort resulted in the 2nd Edition: the Service Manual of N.A.. At this conference 37 members were present representing 14 states and 2 foreign countries. Many changes were made to the guide, but one theme remained constant. What is, and is not N.A was clearly defined.

Excerpt from The N.A. Tree:

“Another important thing to keep in mind is that some of the service arms which we describe in this structure are not a part of the N.A. program. They exist separately and are designed to provide services to the program. The Narcotics Anonymous program consists only of 12 Steps, 12 Traditions and addicts helping each other...”

The N.A. Tree was again revised and sent out to the Fellowship for input on March 1, 1978. By the spring of 1979, the 3rd edition of the Tree now known as the (Blue) Service Manual of NA was approved. After approval at the conference unauthorized changes to the World level of service were made by one or a small group of people. This created some controversy but was never corrected.

Following the first massive implementation of the structure during the Literature movement that wrote our basic text, the Policy Committee revised the manual again with what had been learned including visionary changes to world service. That proposed revision was distributed to the entire fellowship for approval. It is referred to as the Green Service Manual.

It is a fine piece of NA History. Perhaps, going back to the roots of our tree, we will find the necessary guidance we so desperately need in our fellowship today.

Report on U.S. Fellowship Assembly For a number of years there has been increasingly widespread dissatisfaction with the direction of structural service. Recently directives from NAWS and the World Board have disturbed an even larger segment of NA Members. So a core group of members from all over the country have come together, members with varying amounts of time clean, service experience and talent, but with one common service goal: to offer the fellowship of NA in the united states the opportunity to act on our 9th Tradition; "...create service boards and committees directly responsible to those they serve". The upcoming conference in Wichita, KS will draft proposals to NA groups to do just that, perhaps the name of the newly created service will be the USSC or United States Service Conference, Group Conscience will determine if a service board or committee is created and what it will do, who and how it will serve.

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Dedicated to [true trusted service](#) for the NA Member, Group or committee who wants to effectively carry the NA message of total abstinence from all drugs and Recovery from Addiction to the addict who still suffers. We will be steady, reliable, non-political, and non-combative. We are guided by the [12 Traditions](#) of NA and [Directly responsible](#) to those NA Groups we serve.

Your Fellowship Magazine

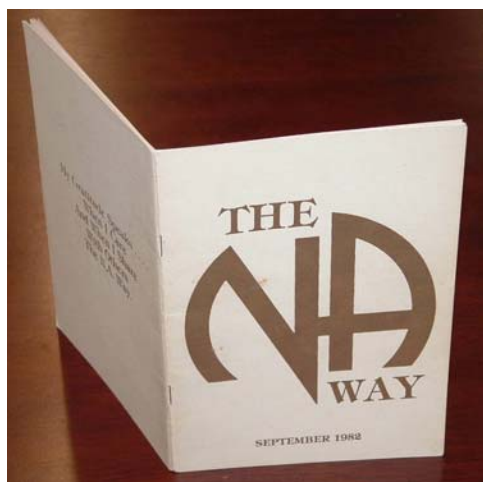
Share...

and be shared with...

Like it was when NA was new and young and
life-or-death intense:

You matter to us so we will tell you the truth as
we know it with nothing held back.

“...so that no addict seeking recovery need ever die...”



We publish your input—the opinions presented are not necessarily those of the New/Old NA Way or Anonymi Foundation.