

+ Part One +

Subject:

Asia Pacific Forum Newsletter

From:

"Vickie"

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To:

NA in Indonesia

I'm an addict named Vickie L.. The first time I used drugs, I was about 15 years old and the event was a night out with two other girls. The fact that all three of us were named ³Vickie² is not the only reason that this was an unforgettable evening. What I found that night blew my mind...in more ways than one. I was quite excited about this discovery and was looking forward to the next opportunity to do it again before I even got home that night.

However, that unforgettable evening was not over yet. I got in bed, covered up and here comes my mother to hug me and tell me that she is glad that I am home. She immediately knew that I was high and it seemed as though her entire life flashed before her eyes because her perfect, precious daughter was high. When she said that she was awakening my father, I pleaded with her not to do so, but she brought him to my room immediately. I truly believe that if he had beaten me or just hit me once, I would have used that as a ³blaming² technique in my angry excuse to use again. Yet my father hugged my mother and he cried. That kept me from using again for about ten years. Talk about a progressive disease! Even after ten years between the first and second times using, I can look back and see exactly what that phrase means. It was just as though I had continued to get high all those years and from then on, I was on a downward spiral at the rate of a non-stop avalanche.

Because of using, my life included such as the following: my children taking care of themselves...and me; my parents and grandmother going through enough heartbreak to well make up for my ten years of abstinence; giving up a job that I really liked working with juvenile delinquents in a detention center; losing almost everything...including my mind. Although the following events did not take place all at the same time, some were continuous through out my active addiction. I experienced physical and mental abuse, beaten up, back broken, rape, and much more. But to top it all off, I was gunshot in the left side of my head (left temporal). During the neurosurgery, my family was told not to

expect me to live, but that if I did, I would be paralyzed from the neck down, have total memory loss and completely lose my left eye. None of this happened, not even slightly losing any vision. While in active addiction, miracle after miracle after miracle happened to keep me alive.

Did I stop using? No! I decided that I would quit this drug, but not that one or that other one and also decided that maybe I should add this one or two. Insanity in active addiction.

When I finally hit bottom and admitted myself into the hospital for help, I had no idea what was about to happen with my life. After ³Detox², the hospital took me to a Narcotics Anonymous meeting and my whole world suddenly became real. I honestly shared with them that I knew I had a problem with this drug and that drug, but I did not know how I would be able to live without a few other drugs. They knew what I meant, understood what I was talking about and told me about Narcotics Anonymous. They explained to me that the disease of addiction can attempt to easily convince an addict that she needs drugs, while they are killing her all along! They told me that an addict ³cannot do just one² of any drug, that ³one is too many and a thousand is never enough².

Everything that those members of NA told me that night, I could relate to! I was beginning to understand exactly what they were sharing with me! And one of the most memorable feelings of that evening was that I finally felt at home! I finally felt that I fit in somewhere, that I belonged!

This night my clean date: April 12, 1994 and I thank NA and the God of my understanding for that evening that turned my whole life around and I could finally begin to get to know the real world...and the real Vickie. Since I have been clean, there have been even more miracles! The God of my understanding has continuous ³coincidences² take place and I am constantly amazed. There have been some very painful times, such as my mother's death, but my strength comes from the very loving, spiritual fellowship of NA and from a relationship with the God of my understanding that I could not have previously dreamed about. I remember when I was a few months clean, a man shared in a meeting that it is a good idea to write out a list about your dreams. He said to make a list of the dreams that you would like to see come true in the next five years; the next ten years; and fifteen and twenty. He also suggested keeping them in a journal, perhaps, and to look back on them one day...that you would be surprised at how many of them have come true. I

looked back on my list for five years and it is amazing! Yes, almost all of them have come true and the ones that did not, believe me, I am grateful that they didn't! I must add that one of them missed it by a little. I dreamed to visit Ireland because it is the homeland of my ancestry. That has somewhat taken place because I flew over it en route to Indonesia!

After very much prayer and watching many closed doors opening, I accepted a position in a recovery centre in Bogor as the female house administrator and drug addiction counsellor. The primary means of recovery at this centre is to have all of the residents in NA or we know that it will not work.

The first meeting of Narcotics Anonymous in Indonesia took place on April 1, 1997 in Jakarta. This was started by an addict named David G.. He recognised over 50,000 addicts (in Jakarta alone) with no recovery program available. There was a ³med detox², but no NA meetings, no aftercare of any nature. David G. knew through his own experience, strength and hope that if this did not immediately change, many deaths could not be prevented. NA began and there are now many recovering addicts in Indonesia!

In Bogor, there are three meetings per week: Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays...with more to come. The attendance for two of these meetings is usually 50-70 members. One of the meetings is closed for addicts with HIV/AIDS. We see that this is seriously needed in Indonesia. We've come to believe that there are other diseases that quite often adjoin themselves with the disease of addiction. At the recovery center, the present statistics are as follows: 64 residents, 20% HIV positive and 80% Hepatitis C positive. However, twelve of the residents have not been tested as of yet and with practically watching these percentages grow, we know that it will continue to do so.

NA in Indonesia is presently in need of areas, regions, conventions and especially in need of translated literature! Friends of ours in the New Hope Area of NA in North Carolina of the United States got together and told our story here to the World Service Office. The members there bent over backwards in order to get NA literature (English is certainly better than none) and key tags to us! I wish many more could have seen these members, some who had over a year clean, go up to get their key tags for the first time! I believe many of us have been taking such as this for granted in comparison with the members here. I see the Steps,

the Traditions, the spiritual principles of Narcotics Anonymous at work on a daily basis with these residents here. I know without the meetings, without the unity of the fellowship none of us could survive. We have so much to give together, such unconditional love that comes with the experience of recovery.

Vickie L.

The Asian Pacific Forum Newsletter presents the experiences and opinions of individual members of Narcotics Anonymous. The opinions expressed are not to be attributed to Narcotics Anonymous as a whole, nor does publishing of any article imply endorsement by Narcotics Anonymous.

Please send articles, list of events, or other material to apfnews@hotmail.com or mail it to Ivan, 28/d/ Police Court Lane, 3rd Flr., Fort Mumbai 400 001, India.

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TO BE CONTINUED

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