

# The Freedom Connection

ISSUE #5

That No Addict Need Ever Die Without  
Having had the Opportunity To Experience  
A Better Way Through N.A.

"A VISION  
OF HOPE!"

NEVERMORE  
ALONE...

GLAD TO  
BE ALIVE!!!

MIRACLES DO  
HAPPEN

A  
EW

hing

REACH OUT  
FOR FREEDOM

THROUGH  
N.A.

LIVING  
A MIRACLE

MAKE  
THE CONNEC-  
TION TO A  
NEW WAY OF LIFE

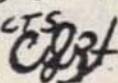
"We Made  
A Decision"

"A SPIRITUAL  
CONNECTION."

"FREEDOM  
THROUGH  
FELLOWSHIP."

SUGGESTED  
DONATION  
\$1.00

YEARLY  
SUBSCRIPTION  
\$6.00

THE FREEDOM CONNECTION  
IS A MONTHLY N.A. NEWS-  
LETTER CARRYING A  
MESSAGE OF RECOVERY  
TO ADDICTS THROUGH-  
OUT THE  EASTERN  
REGIONS OF N.A.



### THOUGHTS FROM A JUNKY'S JOURNAL

A thought just came into my head about creativity...something John Lennon said; "When I produce something creative, I try not to waste time judging it, analyzing it, reading it over for mistakes, will it sound good?...etc. Just let it go... if it is true creative expression, it doesn't belong to me, anyway. I was just the instrument. I let it play me, and then turn it over to the masses for inspiration in their daily lives. Let the critics do the criticizing and analyzing."

This is important to me, because I get all bogged down with rereading things I write, and interrupts my flow. That's been part of my problem this week. Thank you, God. And thanks, John. Help me to keep growing, God...I've a lot to learn. I want to be an instrument of your peace.

### From a Committee Member

A beautiful thing has happened. This newsletter no longer has an "Editorial Staff". It has a "Newsletter Committee". Our editorial policy is as follows: you send it in, we print it, as is. Who are we to change what you have learned from your experience?

How you express yourself is how we feel we should carry your message. We're merely the instrument for your message. Where as before, we had one or two people writing all the editorial articles, we now have five or ten. I can't, we can. God heard our cries for help and he sent it- in the form of a committee. Thank you, God. Thanks committee. Together we stand, divided we're up shit's creek!

Signed,  
A Grateful Committee  
Member

### CHESAPEAKE POTOMAC REGION AREA SERVICE MEETING SCHEDULE + AREA SERVICE NEWS

#### B.R.A.N.A.

P.O. Box 3035  
Winchester, VA 22601  
-meets Sunday , 2:00 p.m. at  
Shalome., Stephenson, VA. (703)667-0875  
(703) 667-5858

#### Northern V.A. NORVANA

P.O. Box 7113,  
Falls Church, V.A. 22046  
Meets every 1st Sunday  
of the month at 2:00 p.m.  
5109 Chowan Ave. , Alexandria, V.A.  
(703)532-0587

ASR-Steve C. We have 2 step meetings,  
9 open discussion and no instutional  
meetings. Our working committees are  
Literature, Public Information, and Hot-  
line. Hospitals and Instutions needs  
help from other areas with some sobriety.  
Chairperson- Joe C. Vice Chairperson-  
Sara

#### Tidewater Area Service C.

c/o Jack Haney (804) 467-4367  
1645 Ashton Dr. Virginia Beach, VA.  
23464

Meets: 2/15, 2:00 p.m. at Easy Does It-  
Club, 1153 Harmony Rd., Norfolk, VA.  
ASR- Jack H. The 1st VA State Convention  
of NA was held on Jan. 7-9, 1983. The  
Convention was a great success, approxi-  
mately 400 addicts were there..The area  
received excellent media coverage, includ-  
ing t.v. and front page local news spots.

#### Washington D.C.

P.O. Box 29198 W.D.C. 20017  
Meets: 1st Wed. of month at 666 11th St.  
N.W., W.D.C. Paul Funney, 801 P. St. N.W.,  
W.D.C., 20001, (202)234-2218  
We have 18 weekly meetings and 14 insti-  
tutions meetings. We have a hotline beep-  
er on 24-hour call.



2

MARYLAND AREA SERVICE

Committee Reports

Hospitals and Institutions- reports on meetings at Southern Maryland Pre-Release Center every Sat. night at 8:15 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Public Information went to the Montgomery Hotline meeting and spoke on the behalf of N.A., about 50 people were there.

P.O. Box 1622, College Park, MD 20740

Meets: 1st Wed. of each month at St. Andrew's Church (7:00 p.m.)

4512 College Ave., College Park, MD  
Dennis S., 401 Cherry Lane, B-208,  
Laurel, Md 20707 (301)953-1748

We have two institutional meetings, our hotline is doing o.k., and we have a monthly newsletter. We're putting a bid for the 5th East Coast Convention. We've been in two newspapers and we have a steady flow of literature.

Treasury Report shows balance of \$238.00 after payment of rent.

Hotline received 58 calls in January. We have bought the hotline number from the phone company. Since we own the line, we can now accept long distance calls.

Newsletter needs support and input.

The following meetings in the Maryland Area need support:

Powerful Change-10905 Ft. Washington Rd./409, Ft. Washington, MD

Day by Day- Laurel Presp., 5610 Sandy Spr. Rd., Laurel, MD

Free at Last- Wash. Mem. Chr. Church, 10900 Indian Hd. Hwy., Ft. Wash., MD

Forestville Meth. Church, 3111 Forestville Rd., Forestville, MD

Address:

**C**,M.A.S.C. of N.A.

P.O. Box 1622 College Park, MD  
20740

Hotline # 301-459-9355

3

Richmond Area

RASCNA- P.O. Box 128 Richmond, VA. 23201  
Debbie D., (804)740-4573, 1241 Gaskins Rd., D-2, Richmond, VA 23233

Meets: 2nd Thursday, (next 2/10) 8:00 p.m., at 33rd & R. St. (Churchill) Richmond. Our area has a new answering service! Our phone no. is (804)358-0409.

The P.I. Committee also has sent letters and literature to various agencies, etc., who have contact with addicts. We're beginning to get referrals from the court systems. The Greater Richmond Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse has asked N.A. to participate in a "Public Awareness Workshop" to be held March 14th, which we've agreed to do. Our area has two new meetings (for a total of 9). One is a speaker meeting in an adolescent treatment center..The other is in Petersburg.

Baltimore Area

1st Thurs. of Month, 7:00 p.m. at Wheathersville Rd., Dichersville, Off Security Blvd. Shellie, 6809 Greenspring Ave., (301)486-2645. ASR-Randy J. We have 35 regular meetings and a new noon meeting, 7 institution meetings, and 3 Naranon meetings. Public Information- We're on 2 t.v. stations, and 2 or 3 radio stations. The hotline is running fine- new chairperson- Beverly T.- monthly schedules and newsletters. Special events: Cruising on a boat all day, July 3, 1983. \$6.00 each person. Convention committee- We're putting in a bid for the 5th East Coast Convention.

Peninsula Area

P.O. Box 7164, Hampton, VA 23666

Meets: 3rd Sat. of month, at 100 W. Queens Way, Hampton, VA 23666  
Billy E., 216 Regent St. #3, Hampton, VA 23669, (804) 723-2970. We currently have 8 regular meetings and 2 institutional We have formed a Convention Committee and are in the process of putting in a bid for the 2nd VA Convention.



4

### CHANGES IN OUR BASIC TEXT

Well, as we reported in our last issue, Our Book should be coming out from the printer and into the hands of the Fellowship this month. As far as we know, it will be a compilation of the Approval Form of our Basic Text together with the Stories section approval form. We will receive it in hardback form, and copies should be available to all who want one. The content will all be exactly the way the Fellowship approved it at W.S.C. 82, with the following exceptions: in the 4th Tradition (in chapter 5), which states, "Each Group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other Groups, or N.A. as a whole.", in the 2nd paragraph, there are 3 deletions. The decision to make these deletions was made by the W.S.O., the W.S.C. Admin. Committee, and the Board of Trustees. Here is that paragraph, with the deletions underlined:

"One might ask, "Are we truly autonomous? What about our service committees, our officers, activities, Hot Lines, and all other things that go on in N.A.?" The answer is that these things are not N.A. (deleted) They are services we utilize to help us in our recovery and to further the primary purpose of our Groups. Narcotics Anonymous is a Fellowship of men and women, addicts meeting in groups and using a given set of spiritual principles to find freedom from addiction and a new way to live. All else is not N.A. (Deleted) Those things we mentioned are the result of members caring enough to reach out and offer their help and experience so that our road might be easier. Whether we choose to utilize these services is up to the group. (deleted)...end of para. Again, these changes were not Group Conscience Approved changes from the Fellowship, they were made independently by our trusted servants in the W.S.O., the W.S.C. Admin. Committee, and the Board of Trustees.

The other deletion made by our Trusted Servants on our appointed service boards and committees, independent of Fellowship approval, was

5

in the 2nd paragraph of our 9th Tradition. This tradition states that, "N.A. as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve." Here is the 2nd paragraph of this tradition, with the deletions underlined:

"The ninth tradition goes on to define the nature of things that we can do to help N.A. It says that we may create service boards of committees to serve the needs of the Fellowship. None of them has the power to rule, censor, decide or dictate. (deleted)"

They exist solely to serve the Fellowship, but they are not a part of Narcotics Anonymous. (deleted)  
This is the nature of our service structure as it has evolved and been defined in the N.A. service manual."

The above excerpts from the traditions section of OUR BASIC TEXT, Chapter 5, is to the best of our knowledge, the only place in Our Book where changes were made by our trusted servants in California. However, these changes, if we as a Fellowship accept them, would give our W.S.O., our W.S.C. and the Board of Trustees the right to make whatever changes they feel like making in our literature. It would also give them the right to dictate to us, and to not be directly responsible to we, the Fellowship. This Newsletter, as a committee of trusted servants for The *East Coast* Recovering Addict, has no opinion on this issue. It is only our duty and responsibility to report to you the facts that we receive. It is up to you to decide what is right and what is wrong. We urge you to let your conscience be your guide in this important matter affecting N.A. as a whole, along with the individual group's autonomy.

Your Trusted Servants,  
Freedom Connection  
Committee.



A LETTER OF HOPE

6

Dear Freedom Connection,

How are you? I hope when you get this letter it finds all of you in N.A. in the best of health. As for me, time is going by. I know deep down inside that I need people out there like you. I am going to tell you a little about me.

I have been using drugs since I was 13 years old and have been in and out of prison since I was 17 years old. I am a three time felon. I have two state bits behind me. I know if I ever use drugs again I will get another felony. I will never see the streets again. So, what you have done for me I appreciate it very much. I was involved with the first N.A. group- The New York Awareness Group. I don't know if you know Terry R. from New York but he was the first one to bring it to the New York area. He was a very close friend of mine. As a matter of fact, we lived together with my family when we were drugging. I would like everyone in N.A. to give him a big hand for what he has done for N.A. and people like myself in the New York Area.

When I come out I would like to bring it into the prison system after I get out. I know there is going to be a lot of hard roads ahead but as long as I don't use for this day I am o.k. I just take one day at a time. It is very hard to do it in prison with all of the negative around me. I do the best I can with the literature I get from people like yourself and with letters I get from my ex-wife. She has been straight for over a year now. Thank God and N.A. that I have found a better way of life.

The hard time is to come when I am released from prison. So if you can get anyone to write to me towards their recovery I would really appreciate it. Man or woman, it does not matter to me as long as they can give me positive thoughts. Even if you can print my name in your new paper for people to write me on positive thoughts,

7  
it would be great for me to get mail like that. I really get only one letter a month from my ex-wife. I don't really have the right people to write to me. I only knew drug addicts out there; you and I know how that is with people that are still using. Once in a while I get a letter from Terry R. and my mother and father. I can use all the help I can, now that I will be out in August of 1983. Well, that is about it. Take care and God bless all of you in N.A. Hope to hear from you soon!

WRITE!!

Love,  
Tony

ADDRESS  
Anthony T.  
81A5799  
Box 149  
Attica, NY 1401

'Lift Us Up'

From Despair...

Rise from that deep cold pit,  
The pit which has smoothed your sight,  
Your numbers being held,  
It's oh so bright, can you see?

Exalt from your past that lies,  
Deceitful all those years.  
Appearance of a queen and inside a maid,  
You can change, can you feel?

Move upward in space of time,  
Time that remains to come and go.  
Stand still is for only you, I guess,  
Have you even spoke, can you talk?

From a distance the force arrives,  
It's unknown to many who live in dreams.

People who refuse to come meet at peace,  
Isn't the taste a sweeter one than the  
one you now know?

You're on that elevator that has an end-  
less stop,  
Endless to those who remain to survive.  
For life is here today as it was yester-  
day,  
Lift us up, so we can stay on the steps...

April S.



RECENT EVENTS IN N.A.

1. Theatre of the Absurd - Held in the basement of the St. Paladis church for actors in Manhattan, New York City. This was a huge success and another unified effort displaying the creative freedom and clear craziness that springs from the well of selfless service. A fundraiser put on by the Convention Committee of N.A.-13, this absurd event was joyous, hilarious, serious, and memorable. Members of N.A. came from the Four Winds-Corr.; New Jersey; Phila.; Montgomery County, Pa.; Bucks County, Pa.; even Gwland, Pa. and of course all those lovable, dedicated New York N.A.'ers.
- Onstage, one was treated to all forms of entertainment. You name it, it was there. From the Blues Brothers, rolling and frolicking to that smoky blues beat to the heart-melting rendition of "Desperado" performed by the lovely Betsy. Stand-up comics stuck their foot in their mouths and fell on their faces and loved it. N.A. folk songs were sung. Beauty contestants, that would make Miss America blush, paraded onstage. A piano solo right out of Boris Karloff's attic and the memorable and serene guitar expertise and singing by our friend Sal were performed. M.C. Tony made Ed Sullivan look like an amateur. The dance that followed was wild and wooly. Thank you, New York N.A., for an event that lightened our hearts and chiseled an absurd sculpture of humour on our mind's eye. Capped off by a 3 a.m. meeting at Rose's house, we left with love in our hearts and laughter in our souls.

1st Virginia State Convention for Narcotics Anom.

I am happy to have been appointed to report on this grandiose event in N.A. history; Virginia's first. I will give you my own personal account plus information I attained from another participant. I arrived Saturday at 2:00. It had been a long trip from Vermont, and I was very crispy from the trip. Most of the other people had been there since Friday noon. It took me a while to adjust to what was happening.

The convention was a great success. The V.A. Beach Hilton was sold out at noon and the Ramada next door was filled soon thereafter. The marathon meeting kicked off with a general spirit of happiness and joy. People were happy to be clear and able to share their experience, strength and hope. The marathon lasted the duration of the convention.

There was a dance Friday night for those who were into bopping to the beat of plastic discs. Next room over they had a hot tub, sauna, and pool. It was a great place to unwind and relax. Throughout the area there was plenty of fellowship. Sharon and Karen were there sharing and caring.

In the morning we regrouped. Two-hundred and fifty recovering addicts could not fit in the convention room so they went into the banquet room across the street. Karen spoke on the convention theme, "Winds of Change". She had a beautiful message that brought tears to many eyes. Brother Rick followed up on how N.A. has changed his life; through the steps, with a sponsor, and lots of fellowship.

I arrived just in time for the workshops. I ended up in the newsletter workshop. The room had a bunch of newsletter compilers present. We shared the what's, how's, and why's of newsletters. Many new newsletters have formed recently and the table was filled with a great assortment of creative newsletters with the message of recovery. A Virginia addict was inspired and instructed on starting a newsletter. At first he thought he couldn't do it but he started off great.



AL was at the service structure workshop. PS work was discussed. Violations in traditions at the level of J.V. was discussed. The general consensus was that we need more input on your experience with traditions. A Twelve and Twelve is now being compiled. Please send input to: San Diego Lit. Committee, 1805 Pentucket Ave. San Diego, Cal. 92104.

The new starting group workshops had some very exquisite material to consume. There was a new pamphlet called "The Group" at the meeting. It will be out for approval soon along with a lot of other much needed information. Our literature is growing with our fellowship.

Next on the agenda were some special purpose meetings: Men's, Women's, and Gay meetings. Personally, I prefer plain old N.A. meetings; we're all addicts. Then there was the banquet. Yum! Sirloin steak, and veggies for us veggies. Bob B. from California spoke. He said, "Addiction has nothing to do with drugs." It took me some time to realize that in my recovery. The first step states that we are powerless over our addiction, not drugs.

The banquet dispersed and the band came together. By this time there were 300 to 400 people at the convention. I caught an atmosphere of serenity throughout the convention. The whole affair seemed to shake the Tidewater Virginia area, but everyone seemed so laid back and calm. It must have been the Higher Power at work.

J.V. and newspaper reporters hovered around. They put some N.A. members on J.V. but they did not show their faces. The hotline was on the screen and people started calling and getting a ride to the convention. The newcomers added a spirit of love and caring to the atmosphere.

I finally decided to sleep for four hours so I could enjoy the next morning. Bob and Shirley spoke Sunday morning. They both shared some very touching and inspiring messages that found a special place in my heart. Working on personal recovery, working with sponsors and starting new groups were the topics that caught my interest. Everyone hugged and kissed good-bye and went on their way. I left as a better person. I gained a deeper enjoyment of life. Pain and enjoyment.

This past weekend a 14-hour Long Addithon was held at the Plymouth Meeting Mall in Montgomery County. The theme of the event was "TOGETHER WE CAN" and addicts from all over Montgomery County, Philadelphia, South Jersey, Bucks County, Little Apple Area, Delaware, New York City, and even Florida were present to share together.

The Addithon began at 10:00 with a speaker meeting in the main church in which Jerry P. from the big apple (N.Y.C.) shared. After that, everyone headed off to different workshops and topic discussion meetings. Some of the topics of discussion were: Honesty, Sponsorship, all of the steps (broken up into two at a time), Acceptance, Relationships, Traditions, Love or Lust, Recovery and Relapse, and Gratitude.

By morning, those who had survived the all-night affair were treated to a Survivors' Meeting chaired by Roger J. from Florida, via New York City. The sunrise speaker was AL R. from Bucks County. After that, a Service Workshop was held.

The main theme of this meeting centered around the need for improved communication, particularly within the various sub-committees in the Areas of the Greater Philadelphia Region. Also touched on was the need for more members to get involved in Service. It seems that the same faces always show up for whatever is going on, service-wise, and many of the dedicated workers are becoming burnt-out. We need more people involved in the Areas and Region! We also discussed a number of recent tradition violations in the area of media contact, and what to do about them. There was a suggestion and considerable discussion on the formation of a Regional Board of Trustees, some kind of a group or board of members who have a good working knowledge of the Traditions who could be available and contacted whenever a member was unsure about whether or not a tradition was being violated or whatever.

The Addithon was a very informative, learning experience. I was glad I attended.



## INPUT ON INPUT

When I look at a pen and paper. I'm looking at two effective tools in creative expression. In my program, there is nothing more important than sharing my experience, strength and hope. Even when I feel hopeless, I find hope by writing down my thoughts and feelings. I have an easier time understanding what's going on when it's in black and white.

When I pick up N.A. Literature, Our Basic Text and N.A. Newsletters, I find a message of recovery that finds an open spot in my heart. Anxiety and ego sometimes chokes out my true feelings when I'm trying to share in meetings. I may try to cure you with profound knowledge of recovery or self-obsession will have me so wrapped up in myself that I can't express how I feel. Working the 12 steps with a sponser has helped me carry and receive the message. Writing down my thoughts and feelings has given me an even more clear reality of recovery.

Another convenient aspect of literature is that it can be carried to an isolated addict in Siberia, or an addict in prison (6 one, half dozen the other), simply by adhering a stamp to it. Literature at the world level is bringing the message to many countries today. I'm especially grateful to Area and Regional Literature Review Committees for gathering more message to be carried.

And to think, it all starts with an addict picking up a pen and writing down what's on his mind, in his gut or stuck in his throat!!! You say you can't write? I used to say that....all you need to do is be willing, pray for God to guide that ol' pen, and let it flow! It works - If you let it....

Mike

## INDEPENDENCE

Learning about independence, it's not something you really strive for. It's something that's sort of the after effects of learning how to live. I couldn't learn how to use the program by myself, although I tried. I have a way of sabotaging my recovery and then blaming others. The program is simple to follow but takes a lot of openmindedness, willingness and effort. I have a sponser who I keep in touch with and he helps me to look at my behavior and asks me if I like what I did, and how I could handle myself better. I learned about dependence on other people and how to cut the sick dependencies off. I learned how to take on responsibility for my own recovery. I take care of myself today. I have learned to stop blaming other people and to stop acting like a victim. I'm only a victim if I want to be. I used to let other people make decisions for me, let them run my life, and they did. I found myself doing things seeking approval from these people, but it was never o.k. I could never do enough and nothing ever seemed to work out...and it was their fault; I was just trying to be good. I had to grow up and take charge of my own life and stop letting others take charge of my life. When I let them control me, they will; and I won't like it because I don't have any decisions or choices. It's tough, growing up and being who I want to be, making my own decisions and owning my own mistakes. I get angry today when I see others who aren't responsible because it looks like a good way out. I remember how useless I felt then, and realize how much self-esteem I have now, and understand that they're the losers. Today, through working the program and using my sponser, I am approaching true independence!



14

## MY HOME GROUP

Last night I had a very beautiful experience which I'd like to share with you. It happened at my home group, the Friday Midnight Meeting of N.A. @ Pebble Hill. I guess what it all boiled down to was just a very deep and warm feeling of knowing that I was home. N.A. is my home, true. But Pebble Hill is my home within that home.

When this meeting started 2½ years ago, I had a little over 3 months clean in N.A. Me and my friend George had just moved into a house on a farm way out in the sticks, and the closest meeting was at least a half-hour drive. A girl who lived down the road from us, and a guy who had been real involved in another 12-Step program, came back from the 1st East Coast Convention all fired up about N.A., and they started this meeting on that emotional high. After about 3 or 4 weeks they both lost interest and stopped attending. I'd been elected Secretary of the Group, so for about the next 7 or 8 months, I opened it up, made the coffee, found the speakers, chaired the meetings and paid the rent. No one else was willing to do any of these things, and somebody had to or it would have folded. My recovery depended on keeping it alive, so I hung on for dear life. There were nights when it was just me and one or two other addicts. There was also a night when I fell asleep and didn't show up to open the doors, so the meeting wasn't even held! I felt like dieing, but I kept at it. I had to...I prayed for help. I begged and pleaded for help. Finally, I surrendered to God's will and believed that he'd send help when I needed it most.

15

Then one night help showed up in the form of my sponser-to-be. He told me to take a break, so he took up a lot of the slack. I was able to just go and enjoy the meeting for a change. I was very grateful to me and God for hanging on in the face of despair. Over the years it has become a very special place for me. Many times when it has seemed like nothing else was going right in my life, I always knew that I had my home group to come to. Here, I could talk about anything...and I did. And my life got better. When it seemed like all my friends in N.A. were off on the N.A. ROAD, going to conventions and conferences while I was left behind to carry on the local responsibilities, keeping my own house in order, I had this meeting to go to for solace. And something funny happened. Since I couldn't go on the N.A. Trail, God brought the N.A. Trail to my front door. That summer, many many traveling N.A. members from all over the country stopped by Pebble Hill on their way through Phila., and shared their experience, strength and hope. It often seemed like a convention meeting, week after week. I felt blessed by the Grace of a loving God who heard my need for N.A. recovery and answered it in this way.

Last night @ Pebble Hill, we had a candlelit meeting. The atmosphere was warm and loving. It felt so good to be home again. I'd been traveling to different states and experiencing N.A. elsewhere for over a month. It was very nice to enjoy how green the grass is on the other side of the mountain. But now I could kick back, rub my belly and give thanks for a home like I've been blessed with. A home group is more important to my on-going recovery than even conventions (Though they're pretty important, too!)



## NEWCOMERS

The newcomer is the most important person in any meeting. I was in a meeting awhile ago when someone said that they feel they are the most important person in the meeting and the newcomer comes second. He said that he must be first in order to stay clean. I was infuriated when I heard this and after a prayer I decided to speak out and share my views. For me, I come to a meeting to keep me clean, and I do this by carrying the message of recovery. The more I give to someone the more I grow inside. When I give to someone they can get stronger and they can give to someone else; that's how we grow as a whole. I am very grateful for the addicts who showed me their love and carried the message of hope through N.A. For this I am grateful. In my addiction my selfish attitude of "me" caused me to use. In my recovery this attitude almost caused me a relapse. Through going to meetings, talking to my sponsor, I realized that I have to give what I have away in order to keep it. Reach out and feel good. Help someone.

Renegade

\*\*\*\*\*

## LOVE

Love is a friendship that has caught fire. It is quiet understanding, mutual confidence, sharing and forgiving. It is a loyalty through good and bad. It settles for less than perfection and makes allowances for human weaknesses.

Love is content with the present, it hopes for the future and it doesn't brood over the past. It's the day-in and day-out chronicle of irritations, problems, compromises, small disappointments, big victories and working toward common goals.

If you have love in your life, it can make up for a great many things you lack. If you don't have it, no matter what else there is, it's not enough!

## SANITY

What is reality? I always considered myself to be an expert on the subject, having had my consciousness raised by taking drugs. Lately, I am amazed at just how wrong I was. I had a very narrow, partial, negative, and distorted view of reality. As I clear up, I find that anything I think about seems to change. My most cherished beliefs and illusions are being knocked down like ten-pins. This tended to upset me at first...after awhile, though, I began to see that my beliefs and feelings were just dirt on the window. To get a closer view, a clear view, I had to scrub the negativity away. It has been a long, hard job, but I found at last that underneath all that garbage was a human being. Now I can enjoy life, because I am beginning to discover who and what I really am, and I like what I see. Now my consciousness is really being raised and I thank God and N.A. for my joy and my program of discovery.

Jack V..

THE WILL OF GOD WILL NOT LEAD YOU WHERE  
THE GRACE OF GOD WILL NOT KEEP YOU!!!

## LET THIS RIVER RUN

LET THIS RIVER RUN AGAIN,  
LET IT FLOW AROUND THIS BEND  
FREE TO BE ABLE TO REACH  
THE SEA OF LIFE,  
CLEAN AND CLEAR DOWN TO ITS BED,  
ROLLING EVER FORWARD,  
AVOIDING STAGNANT POOLS OF DEPRESSION  
PAST TURBULENT WATER-FALLS, OBSESSIONS  
THROUGH CRYSTAL-CLEAR STRETCHES  
OF CALM AND SERENITY...  
LET IT ROLL  
GIVE IT LIFE  
LET IT BE FREE  
LET IT BE ME!!!



POWERLESS AND UNMANAGEABLE

When I was first introduced to the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous, I was willing to work the steps, my way. I was receptive to advice in meetings regarding avoiding old friends and staying clean just for today. But my arrogance about letting someone teach me the true meaning of the Steps, left me with years of misconceptions.

I relied on reading literature to learn, and at the time there was no Narcotics Anonymous literature on the steps. I was also going to a lot of Step Meetings, hoping to gain a better understanding. I was still unwilling to trust direction given to me on an individual basis. I thought I was too unique to try it the way it worked for others.

I tried very hard and never seemed to get much of a grasp on the steps in my life. I thought the first step meant when I used drugs my life became unmanageable. Now that I was clean, I could manage my life. When I first read the 2nd Step, I disregarded it. I thought I was sane now, as long as I didn't use I'd be alright. I soon learned different. Even though I was clean, my addiction led me to be crazy. I was still doubtful that I could be restored to sanity. But I found hope when I saw other addicts around me getting better. This eventually gave me the willingness to do it the way they did it, with the guidance of a sponser.

Many moons later, after much pain and suffering from self, I became humble enough to use a sponser. What a relief!! I get to learn what I need to know without all the confusion I used to live with. I now realize how helpful a sponser can be for my recovery. Things are starting to

click in my life, where they only squeaked, grinded and jammed in the past. I spent a lot of time stagnant in this program. I was unwilling to change because I was comfortable feeling depressed. Today, I've had a taste of recovery and I'm willing to grow. This growth didn't come while I was sitting back, I have to get out and go for it. I find rewards in doing things I am uncomfortable with. Getting together with people and letting them get to know me is very good for me. Taking the time to let a newcomer feel welcome is a fulfilling experience. Going that extra mile to share the message gives my life that extra spice of happiness. I have found from my experience that I can share better when I have some spirituality. I feel spiritual when the steps are in my life. The Steps come into my life when I let someone help to put them there. All of this started when I chose a person who had what I wanted - a sponser.

SOMETHING DEEP INSIDE

SOMEWHERE IN THE BACK OF MY MIND THERE IS THIS EMPTY SPACE THAT NEEDS TO BE FILLED, WITH WHAT I DO NOT KNOW, BUT IT IS THERE AND THE FEELINGS OF IT COME UP AT WHAT SEEMS TO BE USUALLY CRITICAL MOMENTS IN MY LIFE. SOMETHING DEEP INSIDE ME TELLS ME THAT I NEED A FOUNDATION, SOMETHING TO FALL BACK ON, SOMETHING TO BE SURE AND DEFINITE, SOMETHING THAT WILL NEVER LEAVE. THAT SOMETHING JUST HAS TO BE YOUR LOVE AND UNDERSTANDING BECAUSE I HAVE TRIED JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING ELSE AND I KNOW THAT YOU ARE GREATER THAN ME AND THAT YOU CAN HELP ME. MAYBE NOT TO FULLY UNDERSTAND ME, BUT TO LIVE WITH ME, AND FOR THAT REASON I NEED YOU BECAUSE I CAN'T LIVE WITH ANYTHING IF I CAN'T LIVE WITH MYSELF.



It is a matter of life and death when the message of recovery is cut off; especially when it's the life line for the newcomer who is seeking a new way of life. Who would want to come around a meeting to spend an hour with the same type of rowdy a--holes I got wasted with all the time? My personal methods of dealing with this would be harsh. But remember, our common welfare should come first. We could evacuate all members from the building except the perpetuators of the disturbance. Then we could call in the Swat Team and shoot tear gas into the building. Just joking! If we took such violent action, the people might learn a lesson, but N.A. would get a bad name and we would most definitely lose a meeting place.

If you look deeply into this situation it isn't rare. The disturbances in other meetings in the Area are similar. They occur at a much higher frequency, but at a lower amplitude. It will most always push the newcomer away when he comes to a meeting looking for

relief and finds the same type of behavior he was around while using. These distractions are a definite problem and there is a need for a solution.

Since our leaders do not govern, I can't tell you what to do. But I could ask for a Group Conscience at the time of the disturbance, remembering a loving God as he may express himself in our Group Conscience. I would make a motion that the Group asks the people to show a desire to stop using by shutting up and listening, or they can leave. If the situation continues, I can only see two alternatives: (1) The members leave with the newcomer and regroup for a meeting in a calmer atmosphere, or (2) Call the proper authorities that are paid to deal with such vandilous vagabonds. Remember these are precious lives we are dealing with. There is no need to be deathly serious in our meetings, but we should be dead serious about our Recovery.

(This article was sent in as a reply to "How Well Do You know You're Traditions"? (Iss. 3) This reader will receive a T/Shirt & 1 issue.)

## New meetings and changes:

"The Only Game in Town", Sunday 8 p.m., Gracie Square Hospital, 1st floor, 76th St. between 1st & York Avenues, Manhattan (OD)

"Recovery Now", Sunday 8 p.m., 800 Morris Park, Bronx

"Morningside Group", Monday 7:30 p.m., Broadway Presbyterian Church, corner of W. 114th & Broadway (enter on 114th), Manhattan (OD)

Amityville, 8:30 p.m. Tuesday, Brunswick Hospital (OD) First Step Meeting, speaker

Institutional Meeting, Port Chester Hospital, Port Chester, 7:30 on Tuesday

"Let it Be" Wednesday at 7:30 p.m., Elmhurst Baptist Church, corner of Whitney & Judge Street (CD Gay) Queens

"Midtown Connection" Wednesday at 8 p.m., 239 W. 49th Street between 8th & Broadway, Manhattan, (OD)

"Surf City Group" 721 W. Broadway, St. Ignatius Church, Long Beach, Nassau (C) Saturday at 8:30 p.m.

## LITTLE APPLE A.S.C.

## New meetings and changes:

Area Service Meeting, Second Saturday of every month, 7:00 p.m., Trinity Youth Center 631 Turner Street, Allentown, PA



## LITTLE APPLE A.S.C.

## New meetings and changes:

"Day By Day" St. John's U.C.C., 6th & Walnut Sts. Allentown, PA (use Walnut Street basement entrance) changed from Tuesday to Wednesday at 8:30, Open

"Day By Day" St. James United Church of Christ, 15th & Walnut Streets, 10:30 a.m. Saturday, Open Step

"Tannersville Group" 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, Route 715 Camelback Road, Tannersville, PA, Open

Step Meeting 8:00 p.m. Friday, Salem Saint Paul's Church, Route 209, across International Dealer in Kresgeville, PA, Open

## CONNECTICUT ASC

Connecticut ASC celebrated their first anniversary on February 20. The next A.S.C. meeting will be March 13. An anniversary party will be held.

The hotline committee is working hard; the hotline is coming nearer to operation.

An addithon will be held on April 29, 8 p.m. to April 30, 8 p.m. at United Presbyterian Church, Seaside Avenue, Milford, CT.

A new meeting list will be coming out soon. On February 19, the Straight Ahead Group sponsored a beautiful dance. People came all the way from New Jersey, willing to go to any lengths for recovery, fellowship, and love.

ANNOUNCEMENTSN.C.P.A.S.C.

Banquet-March 19th  
Bethany Community Center  
Williamsport, Pa.  
5:00 or 6:00 Sat. evening

## New meetings and changes:

"Always Addicts" Group, Saturday 8:30 p.m., Nassau Presbyterian Church, Nassau Street, Princeton, NJ (OD)

"Crispy Critters" Group, Tuesday 9:00 p.m., Montgomery United Methodist Church, Sunset Road, (off Route 206), Bellemead, NJ Open Step

Trenton N.A., Monday 7:30 p.m., United Methodist Church, Olden & Greenwood Avenues, Trenton, NJ (OSD)

## PITTSBURGH AREA SERVICE

## T.S.R.S.C. Report:

The Region is compiling a directory of all meetings, and trusted servants at an area level. The purpose is to provide unity.

W.C.N.A. Bid Committee held their first meeting Jan. 22. Much work needs to be done and we need help. Next W.C.N.A. Bid meeting will be held Feb. 13, at 4:00 p.m. on Avery St.

Group Reports

Mt. Lebanon- They are planning a dance party in April.

The following meetings in the Pittsburgh area are in need of support: Carrick, Wake-up, High Noon, Homestead, Sat. Night Live, and Plot Thickens.

## Subcommittee Reports:

Hospitals and Institutions. H & I needs support. There is a new H & I meeting at St. Francis detox listed every third Thursday of the month from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. The new H & I address is: P.A.S. H & I Committee  
Frank F., Chairperson  
P.O. Box 19412  
Pittsburgh, PA 15273



24  
1983 OHIO REGIONAL CONVENTION

Theme: "We Made a Decision"

May 27-29

Arlington Arms of Columbus

1335 Dublin Road

Columbus, Ohio 43215

Send to: ORCNA 1

P.O. Box 451

Dublin, Ohio 43017

Costs: Registration: \$10.00

Banquet: \$12.00

Brunch: \$6.00

Singles: \$28.00

Doubles: \$32.00

Call Bob B. 614-486-3280 or Ron S. 614-889-5673

Phil P. 513-399-2231

FOURTH EAST COAST CONVENTION

Theme: "Freedom Through Fellowship"

June 24, 25, and 26, 1983

Lehigh University---Bethlehem, PA.

Cost: Registration: \$10.00

Banquet and Dance \$20.00

Banquet, Dance and Registration 25.00

Call Pete 215-322-8896

Bill 215-776-1548

Total Package: \$65.00

Send to: 4th ECCNA

P.O. Box 4475

Allentown, Pa. 18101

Second Florida Regional Convention for N.A.

July 1 through July 4, 1983

Galt Ocean Mile Hotel

3270 Galt Ocean Drive, Fort Lauderdale, FL

(on the beach)

\$28.00 single, double, triple, or quad

For More Info: F.R.S.C.N.A.

P.O. Box 2016

St. Petersburg, FL 33731

TWELVE TRADITIONS OF N. A.

1. Our common welfare should come first: Personal recovery depends on N.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority- a loving God as He may express Himself in our Group Conscience, our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.
4. Each Group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups, or N.A. as a whole.
5. Each Group has but one Primary Purpose- to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.
6. An N.A. Group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the N.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, Property, or prestige divert us from our Primary Purpose.
7. Every N.A. Group ought to fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional but our Service Centers may employ special workers.
9. N.A. as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. N.A. has no opinion on outside issues; hence the N.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction, rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press radio, and film.
12. Anonymity is the Spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.



## SUBSCRIPTIONS

The suggested donation for each issue of the Freedom Connection is \$1.00. If you don't have the cash and are in need of a copy, you can have one for free. The reason for a suggested donation is so that we may continue to come out on a monthly basis and carry the message to the **EAST COAST Addict**, without having to burden the R.S.C.'s for money.

If you wish to subscribe to the Freedom Connection, you may do so by writing to: 75 MacFarland Ave. Ivyland, Pa. 18974. The suggested donation for a 1-year subscription is \$6.00. You may also subscribe by contacting Bill A. from the Little Apple Area, Bill Z. from Maryland, or Pete B. from Bucks County.

**SUBSCRIBE TODAY! YEARLY RATE WILL BE GOING UP SOON!**

### SUBSCRIPTION FORM

FREEDOM CONNECTION - VOICE OF THE EAST COAST RECOVERING ADDICT.

Please send me one issue every month for the next year.

NAME - \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS - \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT ENCLOSED - \_\_\_\_\_ ( \$6.00 suggested donation)

**"FREEDOM CONNECTION"**  
SEND THIS FORM TO: 75 MacFarland Ave. Ivyland, Pa.  
18974

### INFORMATION FOR THE NEWSLETTER

NAME AND ADDRESS OF GROUP \_\_\_\_\_

GROUP ANNIVERSARY \_\_\_\_\_

AREA NEWS -

SPECIAL EVENTS (Fundraisers, Workshops, etc.) -

AREA HOT LINE #

AREA P.O. BOX #

ARTICLES - (Experiences in Recovery, Stories, Poetry, Opinions

Views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of N.A. as a whole, but rather those of concerned members of N.A.