



TOGETHER WE CAN

N.A. GROUPS OF BALTIMORE NEWSLETTER
P.O. BOX 4730 • BALTIMORE, MD 21211

24-HR. HOTLINE: (301) 760-9610

MAY 1983

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

“Today we experience a full range of feelings. Before coming into the Fellowship, we either felt elated or depressed with very little in between. Our negative sense of self has been replaced by a positive concern for others. Answers are provided and problems are solved. It is a great gift to feel human again.

Taken from “The N.A. Basic Text”

ANNIVERSARIES

3 MONTHS

JOSEPH A. April 26
STUART M. May 15
BILL F. May 18
MILTON S. May 21
JANET S. May 21
GREG B. May 27

6 MONTHS

HENRY W. May 1
RICHARD S. May 2
MARK S. May 4
ANDREA R. May 5
DERRICK W. May 11
DARNELL A. May 18
BILLY K. May 21
JEFF P. May 21
MARK D. May 27
BETTY D. May 29

9 MONTHS

RUTH T. May 12
RICHARD L. May 16
CINDY May 27

The following members will be celebrating **ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARIES**. We feel that you are all miracles and powers of example that this program **WORKS!!!**

DEBBIE S. May 1 Celebrating May 4th, Ellicott City
JAMES S. May 5
DAVE W. May 12
JERRY C. May 15 Celebrating May 18th, Ellicott City
GAIL P. May 15 Celebrating May 22nd, Shot of Hope
BEVERLY T. May 21 Celebrating May 21st, Sat. Noon Liberty Rd.
RICK F. May 27 Celebrating June 2nd, Taylor Manor

Our Special Congratulations and Happiness for the following members:

TWO YEARS

SHELLIE E. May 14 Celebrating May 15th, Loch Raven

THREE YEARS

CHARLOTTE B. May 6 Celebrating May 9th, Charles Village

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Special Events has finalized a CRUISE on Baltimore's top of the line cruise ship, the new, "Port Baltimore". This will be our biggest event yet on Sunday, July 3rd from 9 to 5 p.m. We're going to put 350 recovering addicts on a 3-hr *Cruise Down The Chesapeake Bay*, where the ship will dock in Annapolis. There will be a meeting on the way down. Then we'll get to spend 2 hours in historic Annapolis. The ship will then sail 3 hours back up the bay while we have a Dance featuring Baltimore's premier dance band Kracker Jax. Also there will be a 50's review featuring Frankie and the Delfonics. A meeting is scheduled dockside at 5:30 p.m. The cost is only \$6 a person for the whole day and this includes coffee and sodas. Bring your sun tan oil and a picnic basket and enjoy the day. It certainly will be one we will long remember. Make your check or money order out to **Baltimore N.A. Special Events**, fill out order form below and mail to:

Baltimore N.A. Special Events
619 Aldershot Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21229

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

NO. OF TICKETS _____ AMOUNT ENCLOSED _____

Baltimore N.A. Special Events is sponsoring a Picnic, Saturday, May 7th, 10 a.m. til dusk at Piney Run Park, Carroll Co. Take Liberty Road west, 5 miles past Rt. 32 to White Rock Rd. and make a left. Follow it back to park to the biggest pavillion there. The cost is \$2 a carload at gate. There is a big fishing area, we'll have softball and a meeting. Bring your picnic baskets, food, charcoal, gloves, balls and frisbees. For those who are into fishing we want you to know you can bring your tackle. Our picnics in the past have been a blast and everyone is invited. It's been a good day for families too. Please remember, all members do not have cars, so help a recovering addict and drive him to the picnic. See you there.

Support is desperately needed at the **RUBY TUESDAY GROUP** at Taylor Manor Hospital at 8:30 p.m. A lot of people there are interested in the N.A. program and are asking for help. So please come to the meeting and help carry the message—your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

The **STARTING OVER GROUP** which meets on Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. at Eastern Region Health Center, Franklin Square Drive is meeting in a new room - #326. It needs support of people with clean time (sobriety). The **DAY AFTER GROUP** which meets at Southeastern Reg. Mental Health Center, 7702 Dunmanway (Dundalk) at 5:00 p.m. on Saturday also needs support. The **FREEDOM FROM BONDAGE GROUP**, 4708 Liberty Heights Avenue on Mondays at 7:00 p.m. is starting a Step Meeting - 1st Monday of each month.

New Meetings — We would like at this time to welcome the **EMMITTSBURG GROUP**, which meets on Sundays and Wednesdays at 8:00 p.m., Mt. Manor, Route 15, Emmittsburg, Maryland, to our area.

Randy J. from Baltimore, our Regional Service Representative Alternate is in California for the World Service Conference with Karen from Central Maryland, our Regional Service Representative. Our group conscience, prayers and confidence are with them. We're sure they will let California know we're on the map, alive and recovering in Baltimore. Yea! Yea! Yea!

CONVENTION WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

First Ohio Regional Convention for N.A.

Date: May 24 - 29, 1983
Theme: "We Made A Decision"
Cost: Single Room - \$28, Double Room - \$32
Registration-\$10, Banquet-\$12, Brunch-\$6
Mail fee to: O.R.C.N.A. I.
P.O. Box 451
Dublin, Ohio 43017
Hurry and Register, time is running out!

4th East Coast Convention of N.A.

Date: June 24, 25, 26, 1983
Theme: "Freedom Through Fellowship"
Events: Dance, Banquet, Swimming and Fellowship
Cost: \$65 covers registration, room, meals and events listed above.
Mail fee to: 4th E.C.C.N.A.
P.O. Box 4475
Allentown, Pa. 18101

"TOGETHER WE CAN"

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONVENTION WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

World Conference N.A. - 13

Date: September 1-4, 1983

Theme: "The Impossible Dream"

Events: Fun-Fellowship-Recovery, 24-Hour Hospitality, Marathon Meetings, First Rate Accommodations, Elegant Dining-Banquet

Cost: Single occupancy, \$50 — Dbl. occupancy, \$55
Triple occupancy, \$65 — Quad occupancy, \$75

Mail fee to: Registration Chairman, WCNA-13,
P.O. Box 216, Jackson Heights, N.Y. 11372

N.A. READERS WRITE

"DEALING WITH NEGATIVE FEELINGS"

Frequently I find myself feeling depressed, confused or worried for no reason at all. Then I try to figure it out or bombard the problem with my own self-will. The result is usually more confusion compounded by frustration. The more desperate I feel—the more I try to solve the reason for my feelings—and the worse I feel. At this point I've entered a vicious cycle of depression and confusion and can't seem to break out. Why can't I get out of it—because "I" am the problem—"I" am the one who is trying to solve things—"I" should turn my feelings over to God.

I read in a book that I should thank God for these negative feelings. At first glance this seemed ridiculous, but then I remembered how the people in this Fellowship told me to pray for those people I felt resentments towards until my resentments left. That worked—why not try thanking God for negative feelings? The book that told me to do this said that by thanking God, I was focusing on the solution and not the problem. It told me that by thanking God I was re-affirming my faith that there is a reason for whatever is happening and that everything that happens to me has a purpose in my growth and recovery—no matter how hard it is for me to understand while I am going through these feelings.

In fact, I find that in most of my negative feelings—"I" am the problem. There was no big underlying cause for my depression, fear and confusion—"I", myself was manufacturing these feelings and perpetuating them by searching for the root of these feelings—the root often being the fruitless search itself!

Today I know that when I get tired of running myself through an emotional wringer—I can stop and by surrender, acceptance, faith and thanking God I will find serenity and freedom!

Anonymous

N.A. READERS WRITE

"N.A. UNITY, WITHOUT IT WE'RE DEAD!"

As it says in the First Tradition of Narcotics Anonymous, "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on N.A. unity." Unity to me means hanging tough together, putting our personalities on the back burner and allowing ourselves to be open and willing in all areas of living.

I remember what gave me what I have today. It was a group of addicts doing for each other what I couldn't do alone. The groups are controlled by the addicts attending. When you walk out of a meeting think of yourself—have you tried to preserve N.A. Unity? Not gossiping, maintaining anonymity, helping a newcomer, getting involved in groups, help to carry the message to the still suffering addict.

We have to remember that as long as the ties that bind us together are stronger than those that would tear us apart, ALL WILL BE WELL.

An N.A. Member

SPREADING THE MESSAGE, NOT THE DISEASE

I'm a recovering addict and I know how to get high. What I need to know about is how to live a day at a time and not pick up a drink or a drug. I sit in meeting after meeting and listen for the message of recovery, yet I keep hearing people spending half the meeting on how they were when they were using. A newcomer recently chaired a meeting and shared that her impression of N.A. was a place where people told sad stories.

It is important to qualify yourself so the newcomer can relate. It is also important that we remember our primary purpose—to carry the message to the still suffering addict. Meetings are a place to share our experience, strength and hope. We share how we stay clean, how we work the Steps, how we handle living problems, how we grow, how we live these spiritual principles so we can stay clean a day at a time.

I know patience is a virtue, but it's hard sitting in a meeting hearing how someone ripped their doctor off when I know so many people in the room hold keys to recovery. We are all living clean. We all have important experience we can share on recovery that will help each other stay clean one more day. Let's not overlook our greatest asset, ourselves living the program of Narcotics Anonymous today. Help spread the message, not the disease.

An N.A. Member

An addict alone is in bad company.

"TOGETHER WE CAN"

THE WALK: THE TWELVE STEPS TO RECOVERY

The suggested steps of N.A. do not end with turning our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him. After the third, we have nine more steps that will take us into the biggest journey of self-discovery we will ever experience. I was told that by working these steps, I would change and grow. When I began my fourth step, it was the beginning of a life-long journey of discovering the person I really am and taking an honest look at myself.

‘Fourth Step Guide’

(Submitted to WSC for WSC approval)

1. Don't worry about spelling or neatness: your inventory should be readable but it doesn't have to be a work of art.
 2. **Do not erase** or obliterate anything you write. Strike out "wrong" words or errors with a single line that can be read through.
 3. If something "pops" into your head when you are working on something else write it down or make a note on a separate sheet so that you can return to it later. Then get back to what you were doing before.
 4. You are writing your inventory for you. **At this point, the fifth step does not exist.** Write down everything, even the things that you are unwilling to share. You can always take something out later, but by writing it down at least you will have a chance to see it more clearly.
 5. Write until you have nothing left to write. Your inventory will probably take more than one sitting to write. Try to stop at the end of a section and start again as soon as possible.
- I. Begin your inventory by taking the first three steps in writing: what do they mean to you and how do you work them.
- a. Admit your powerlessness in writing and discuss how your life is unmanageable.
 - b. Write about the "Power greater than yourself" that you have come to believe in, and what you hope this power can do for you.
 - c. Write about your decision to turn your will and your life over to the care of God, **and make that commitment in writing.**
- II. RESENTMENT is the way most of us have reacted to the past. It is the reliving of past experiences again and again in our lives. The more often you have relived an event or gotten into "should have" and "if only" then the more significant that event probably is.
- a. Write about each incident in your life which you have had to relive in your mind at some later date. This includes both "good" and "bad" experiences.
 - b. Write about past actions that you would change if you had the opportunity.
 - c. Write about any events in your life which you feel caused a change in you.
 - d. Write a dictionary definition and at least three sentences on each of the following feelings as they have applied to people, places, things and ideas.

self-pity	greed
pride	lust
contempt	intolerance
hatred	apathy
jealousy	inertia
envy	selfishness
honesty	

- III. ANGER is the way most of us have reacted to the present. It is our reaction to and denial of reality.
- a. Write about the things that make you angry, irritate you, or make you feel uncomfortable. What are your "buttons" and how do they get "pushed?" Are there any key words, phrases, actions, or situations which are sure to "set you off?" The following is a list of some of the things that we often react to with anger. Some of these will apply to you and some will not. Use this list as a starting point and to get you thinking in terms of anger.
 - being criticized
 - being contradicted
 - being ignored
 - being kidded
 - practical jokes
 - being laughed at
 - being gossiped about or talked about
 - being called names (stupid, fat, skinny, asshole, bastard, bitch, whore, etc.)
 - being touched
 - being stood too close to
 - being praised
 - a. Write about each incident in your life when you have reacted "automatically" or for no apparent reason. Relate each incident to people, places, things and ideas.

- IV. FEAR is the way we have reacted to the future. It is our response to the unknown, a fantasy in reverse. Write at least three sentences on each of your fears—past and present (especially those you think are irrational or those which you think no longer bother you). The following is a list of fears. Some of these will apply to you and some will not. Use this list as a starting point and to get you thinking in terms of fear.

people	principles	God
insanity	death	punishment
police	jails	institutions

[Continued on next page]

“Fourth Step Guide” cont.

asylums	authority	rejection
acceptance	failure	success
ridicule	insecurity	self-accessment
honesty	religion	insecurity
accidents	animals	snakes
spiders	insects	the dark
heights	disease	cancer
heart attack	obesity	starvation
hospitals	drugs	sex
impotence	misconduct	rape
marriage	being disliked	discipline
gambling	responsibility	moral codes
stealing	pain	hurting others
attack	justice	past crimes
obsessions	inferiority	ego deflation
sarcasm	public speaking	claustrophobia
water	suffocating	other races
mistakes	desire	pride

V. SEX is an area in which most of us have had problems. One of our old timers sometimes refers to us as “lovers in distress” and this is certainly true. Most of us carry a burden of false shame and false guilt because we have tried to live up to an unrealistic or false moral code.

- a. Write about your “perfect” relationship (casual affair, lover, or spouse) and how your actual relationships have lived up to and fallen short of this ideal.
- b. Write about your sexual fantasies whether or not you have acted them out.
- c. Write at least three sentences about each of the following sex related acts or desires that apply to you or that you have strong feelings about. Use this list as a starting point and add any others you can think of.

adultery	rape
incest	sadism
masochism	pornography
prostitution	molestation
voyeurism	teasing
homosexuality	inter-racial sex
animal sex	indecent exposure
masturbation	fetishes
oral sex	group sex
sex “aids”	abortion
sexual jealousy	
drug abuse as a sex act	
sex relations or acts which you feel are abnormal or unnatural	

VI. ASSETS must also be considered if we are to get an accurate and complete picture of ourselves. This is very difficult for most of us because it is hard for us to accept that we have good qualities. We each have a combination of assets and liabilities and through this program we try to eliminate the negative and accentuate the positive.

- a. Write about each event in your life when you did something good without expecting anything in return.

b. Write at least three sentences on each of the following assets of character. Use this list as a starting point and add any other assets that come to mind.

sense of humor	willingness
being clean	humility
openmindedness	friendship
God awareness	self-acceptance
love	self-honesty
modesty	patience
honesty with others	simplicity
forgiveness	courage
serenity	faith
trust	generosity
acceptance	caring
positive action	self-supporting
sharing	gratitude
promptness	

VII. Answer the following QUESTIONS in writing?

1. How have you and how do you see yourself? (What is your self-image?)
2. What do you want to be when you grow up?
3. What do you want out of life?
4. What things have you done for acceptance that you really didn't want to do?
5. What things did you do while you were using that you find yourself unable to do today?
6. What can you do today that you couldn't do before?
7. What are your fantasies and dreams (other than sex)?
8. What is your definition of freedom?
9. Have you intentionally left anything out of your inventory?
10. Are there any events written in your inventory which never actually happened?
11. Is there anything else you can think of that specifically helps to make you you?
12. What fears and problems have occurred in the process of writing this inventory?
13. What is your definition of surrender?
14. How do boredom, isolation and loneliness affect you and how do you deal with them?
15. What is your N.A. birthday?

Anyone who has some time in the program and who has worked these steps will tell us that the Fourth Step was a turning point in their lives. Ultimately we find out that we are just human, with the same fears, longings and troubles as everyone else. One of the greatest benefits of the N.A. program is discovering that we need never be alone again. Others have felt as we feel. Others have failed where we failed. They are here now in strength of the Fellowship, ready and eager to help us.

This Fourth Step can be a wonderful adventure, reviewing our past performance and our present behavior to see what we want to keep and what we want to be rid of. No one is forcing us to give up our misery. This Step has the reputation of being difficult. In reality, it's quite simple.

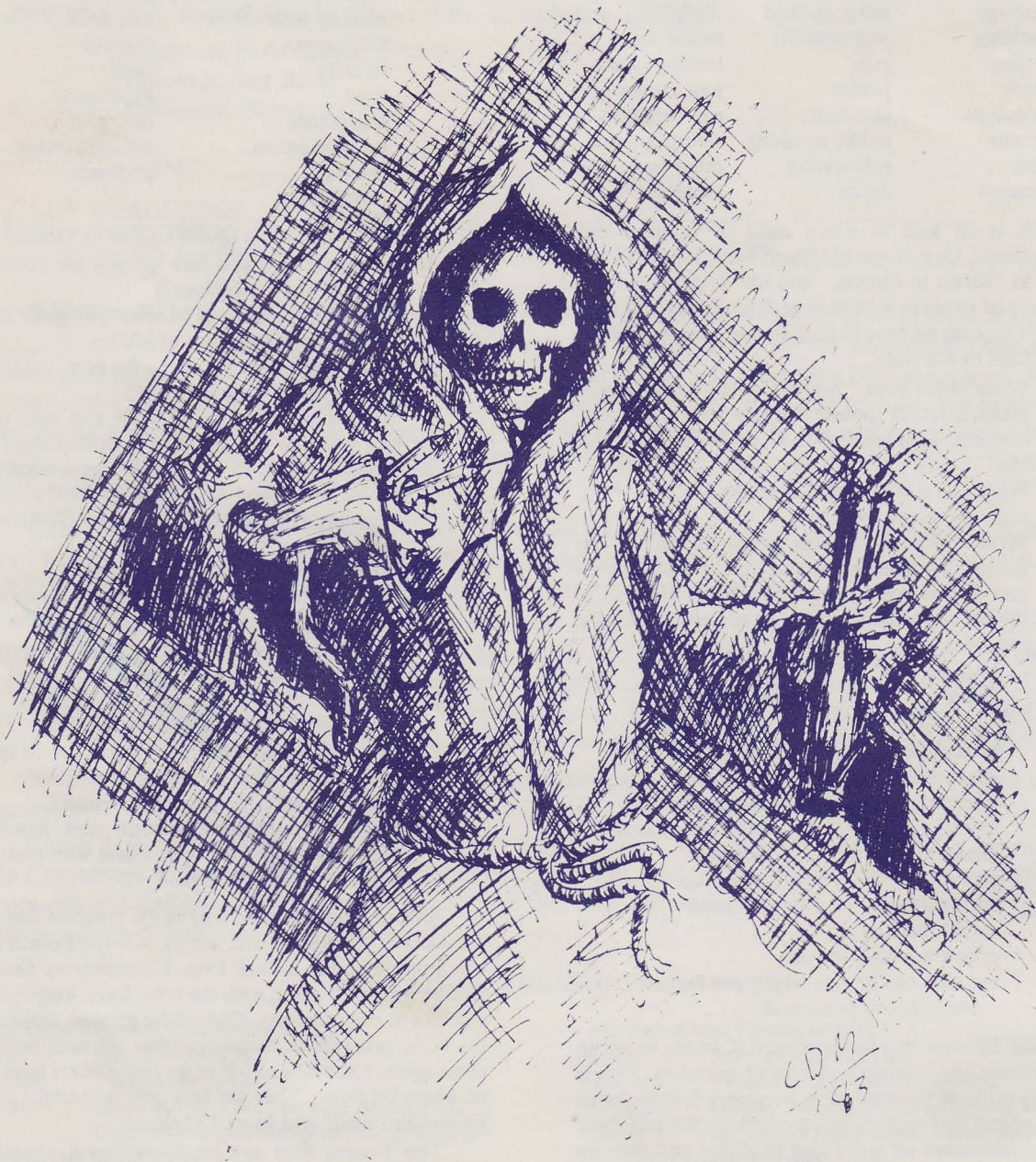
[Continued on next page]

“Fourth Step Guide” cont.

As recovering addicts, we now have the right to reach for levels of greater comfort and we can reach them by getting a handle on what we've been doing wrong. If we want to feel good, we have to stop doing the things that make us feel bad.

We are not going to be perfect. If we were perfect, we would not be human. The important thing is that we

do our best. We use the tools available to us and we develop the ability to survive our emotions. We do not want to lose any of what we have gained; we want to continue in the program. It is our experience that no matter how searching and thorough, no inventory is of any lasting effect unless it is promptly followed by an equally thorough Fifth Step.



Just thought I'd remind you: he's still here! *Juris M.*