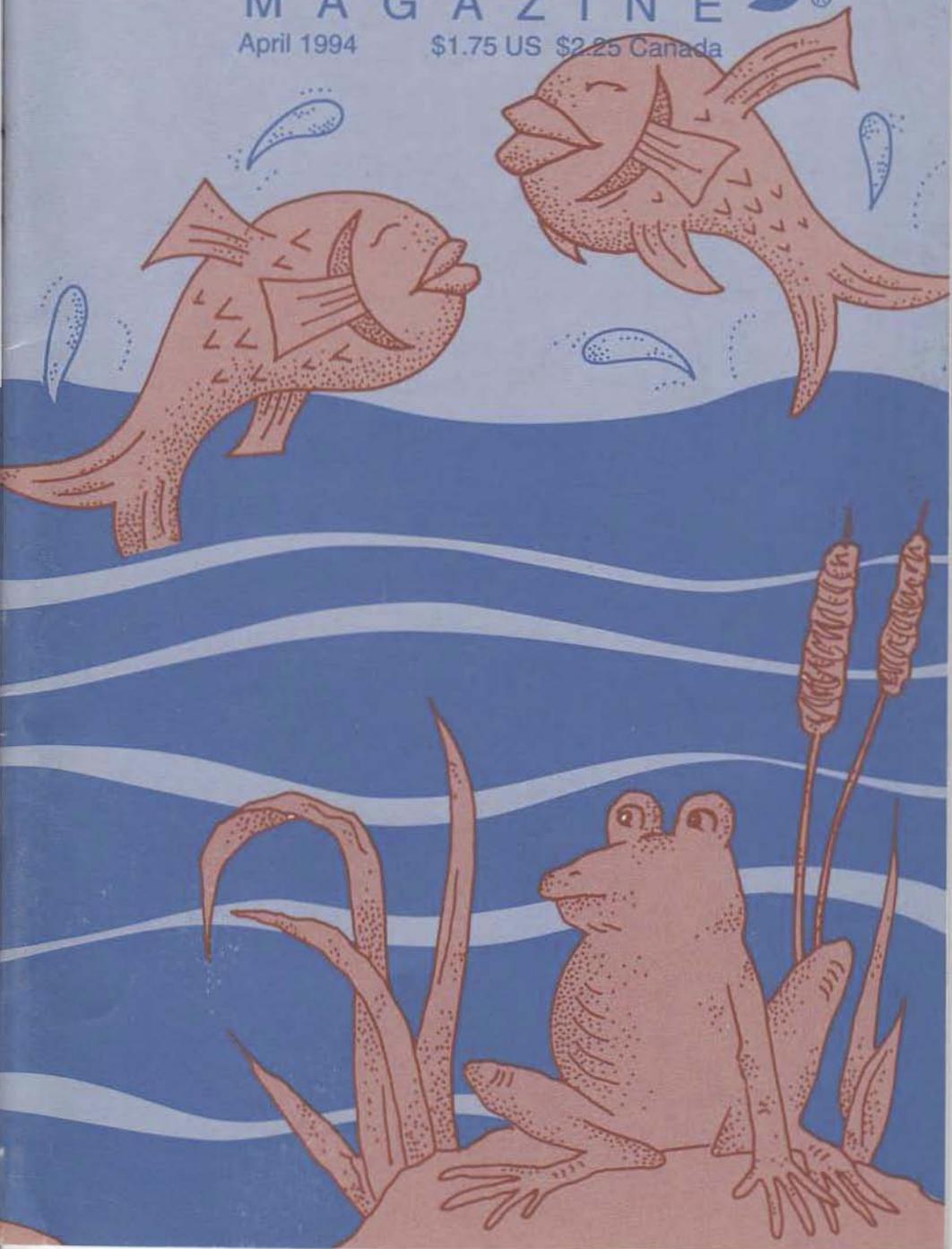


THE NA Way MAGAZINE[®]

April 1994

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The Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous

1. We admitted that we were powerless over our addiction, that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

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THE NA Way MAGAZINE®

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The NA Way Magazine welcomes the participation of its readers. You are invited to share with the entire NA Fellowship in our monthly international journal. Send us your experience in recovery, your views on NA matters, and feature items. All manuscripts submitted become the property of World Service Office, Inc.

The NA Way Magazine 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 publication of any article imply endorsement by Narcotics Anonymous, *The NA Way Magazine*, or World Service Office, Inc.

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From the editor



What would you do if a hurricane destroyed your group's meeting place? If the highway overpass leading to the meeting fell down in an earthquake? If the temperature fell so far below freezing that your car's engine wouldn't turn over? If you couldn't even call another addict because phone lines were down?

When disaster strikes, it affects NA communities along with everyone else. Often we find that we aren't as prepared as we would like to be. This past winter, freezing temperatures and heavy snowfall hit the northeastern US. At the same time, a powerful earthquake rocked Southern California. Both of these events disrupted the meetings and services in those areas, and profoundly affected the recovery of local members.

Most found that ensuring the safety of their families and finding shelter and food were at the top of their priority lists; however, once they took care of those needs, getting together with other addicts and making sure the meeting would go on were next in importance.

I am quite sure that many of you have stories to tell about how you, your group, or your area responded to the crisis. Tales of Herculean efforts to get the meeting doors open have already begun to reach my ears

but, as of yet, there's very little writing reaching my "in" basket.

The NA Way would love to provide a place for you to share your experience. For our readers who don't live near the sites of recent natural disasters, how well prepared are you? Tornadoes, storms, and earthquakes can happen anywhere, anytime. Does your group, area, or region have a contingency plan? If so, please share it with us. There's nothing we can do to stop natural disasters from happening, but if we're prepared, we can all bounce back a little sooner and our groups can keep up with carrying out our primary purpose.

Under cover

In the past few months we've received some much-appreciated feedback from our readers about *The NA Way* cover art. We're printing the following two letters, hoping to encourage others to put into writing their wishes for the direction of *The NA Way*. Your input helps us be more responsive to our readership. Let us know what you think!

Dear editor,

I am in receipt of the latest issue of *The NA Way* (December 1993), and I wanted to compliment both the editorial staff and the artists for the cover. . . .

In my opinion, this is the most thought-provoking cover I have ever seen, and it depicts one of the most important issues facing our fellowship to date. The issue of gender specificity is one that none of us can afford to rest on our laurels about. . . . The cover says it all with absolutely no words to explain the concept or subject matter and, after all, is that not what art is all about?

Keep up the good work. All the best for this coming year, another year of a great recovery publication. One way we can all help the fellowship and gain from it is by subscribing to this periodical. I am quite sure that I saw my first issue some nine years ago. I immediately subscribed and have done so annually since that time.

Thank you again for your efforts to reach all of us, no matter how diverse we are. Sincerely,

Anonymous

To the editor,

As a member of NA and a subscriber to *The NA Way Magazine*, I am embarrassed by the cover of the January issue. I don't get it. To me, this represents someone who is still using. You keep the cover if you like it. I don't like the whole character of Slugg or its use as a merchandising tool. It trivializes and disrespects my recovery and my fellowship. I particularly don't like its use on the cover of a magazine I usually share with newcomers. Please register my protest with the appropriate people so they can hear that their self-indulgence is not appreciated by everyone in the fellowship. And please don't

put this in the context of having a sense of humor. There's a vast difference between humor and stupidity. This cartoon represents the latter. Sincerely,

Anonymous

Group subscription drive

Our annual group subscription drive will be well underway by the time this issue reaches your mailbox. At the end of January, we mailed subscription cards, sample magazines, and a page describing *The NA Way* for GSRs to read in their meetings. All area service committees should have received this mailing.

When your home group announces the subscription drive, please feel free to share with your group's members that you subscribe to *The NA Way*. Also, let them know how much you get out of the magazine. The more subscribers we have, the broader the base of recovery experience available to the magazine, and the more we, your magazine's editorial staff, can benefit from your collective wisdom.

If the GSRs in your area don't seem to be aware of the group subscription drive, let us know. We'll get a package out right away.

CS, Associate Editor

The one thing



Once again, it's my clean time anniversary and I'm writing to you. By the grace of God, I will have compiled eight years clean time at the end of this month—after a twenty-year career of using. That fact, to me, is nothing less than a miracle.

When I first came to NA, I knew I would not be able to stay clean for any length of time. This belief wasn't unfounded or pessimistic; I had proof positive, based on my past experiences, that no matter what I did I could not stay clean. There was no reason for me to believe that NA would bring different results than any other method (jails, institutions, etc.) had. I just could not stay clean and I knew it. It was with this fatalistic viewpoint that I attended my first NA meeting. I was just out of the hospital after an overdose that nearly destroyed my already frail body and knocked any last gasp of hope out of my spirit. I felt the despair and hopelessness that only a person doomed to certain death and devoid of any dignity could feel. I only came to NA because there was absolutely

nowhere else to go. As is the case with almost every addict I've encountered in NA, I had chewed through every friend and relative I'd ever had. I came to NA completely and utterly alone, sure that this would be just another failed attempt to clean up my act. I was positive I'd soon be dying a junkie death on the street.

The oddest thing happened, though, when I came to NA: I stayed clean. When you told me, "Don't use no matter what," for some reason I didn't. It somehow sounded different coming from you. It sounded . . . possible. I still don't understand the mechanics of how that happened; I only know that since I'd never been able to stay clean on my own, something else must be keeping me clean. The "something else" became my Higher Power—whom I choose to call God. God helped me make it to a meeting every day. Luckily, I lived in an area that had lots of meetings and lots of people with long-term clean time. God helped me overcome the insane urges to use until they no longer possessed me. I have Him

with me, and He still keeps me clean.

God spoke to me through other recovering addicts at my first meeting—the only place I had ever heard such a message of hope. That's still true for me. When I get off-center and uncertain, I know for sure that I will hear God's will come through to me that night at a meeting.

I've never, in these past years, had to feel as hopeless as I felt that first day in this program. God gave me my first push to stay clean and since then, I've had hope that I could continue to stay clean no matter what else happens in my life. I've watched all of you do it and I know you've all felt just like I have.

There have been some truly difficult times in my life over the past eight years. I won't call them "bad" times, because that would imply that I know how to interpret what God had planned for me during those times. Looking back, I can see that some of my "worst" times were really some of my best times. For instance, the breakup of my marriage in early recovery seemed like a terrible thing

at the time. However, later this month, I'm going to marry another recovering addict, a person who is my friend and soul mate. This wouldn't be happening if it wasn't for that "bad" time when my marriage broke up. Growth is always hard, but it's always worth it. It's never something bad.

The only place I can hear that life clean is better than life using is at a meeting of Narcotics Anonymous. I've never walked into a convenience store to buy a cup coffee and had the clerk say to me, "You look like you're

There's no reason for me to believe that I won't continue to stay clean by making a meeting every day.

feeling insecure about your job right now, but don't despair because down the road you're going to see this as a learning experience as long as you don't use over it." Only at a meeting would I hear such a message of hope!

Lately I've been hearing from recovering addicts that they don't make meetings because they're "getting on with their lives." I worry about this type of thinking. To me, it sounds like the disease speaking. Since I've always heard what I needed to hear to keep me clean by attending a meeting a day, there's no reason for me to believe that I won't continue to stay clean by making a meeting everyday. I used every day; I make a meeting every day. That seems logical to me,

back and more friends than anyone I know outside NA. I have dignity and meaning in my life. I have the gift of being able to help others and a strong connection with God and other people.

I am a happy, productive member of society with a job at which I have to work overtime. *It could* stop me from getting to meetings. I have children who have boy scout commitments that I have to attend with them. This *could* stop me from getting to meetings. I have community commitments. They *could* stop me from getting to meetings. All of these things *could* stop me from getting to meetings, but they don't. I wouldn't have any of these things without those very same meetings.

Imagine what it would have been like if all the addicts who were sitting in your first meeting were off somewhere else, "getting on with their lives."

and I do try to keep things simple nowadays. Choosing not to go to meetings because of "other things" going on in my life is, to me, forgetting to give homage to the one thing that made those other things possible: NA.

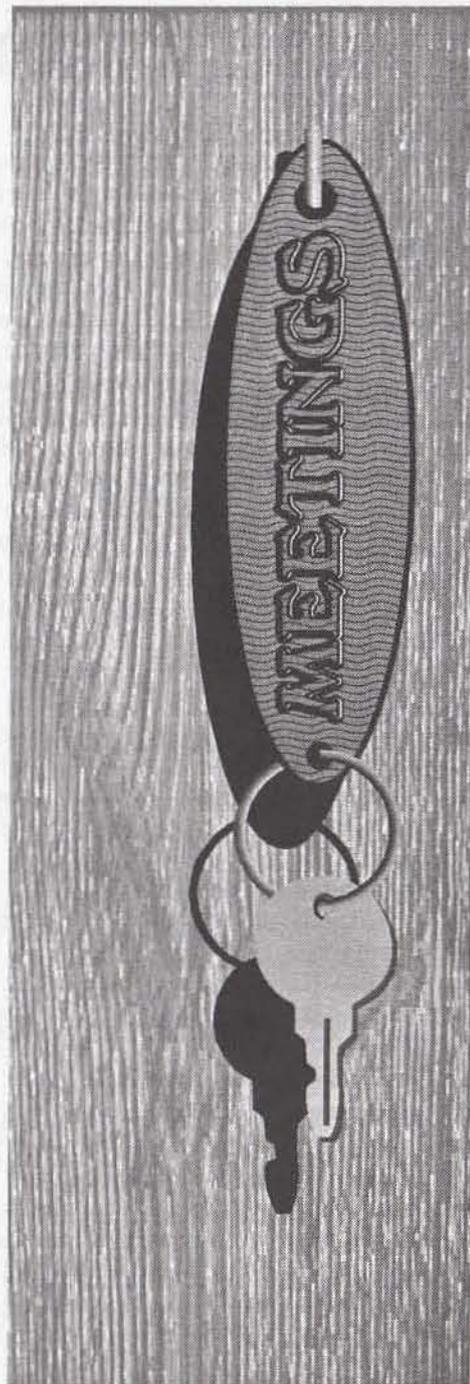
I came to NA with nothing. Today I own my own home and have a good career (I was unemployable when I got here). I have children who are well-adjusted (if a little demented—after all, they are mine) and a loving soon-to-be spouse. I have my family

For many reasons, it chills me to watch recovering addicts fall away from meetings. I'll tell you a couple of those reasons here. One, every returning relapser I've ever heard talks about falling away from meetings. Because for us using means eventual or immediate death, the thought of relapsing over something as preventable as not going to meetings scares me. Two, it's selfish of us to withhold our experience, strength, and hope from newcomers just because we've gotten all we need from the program

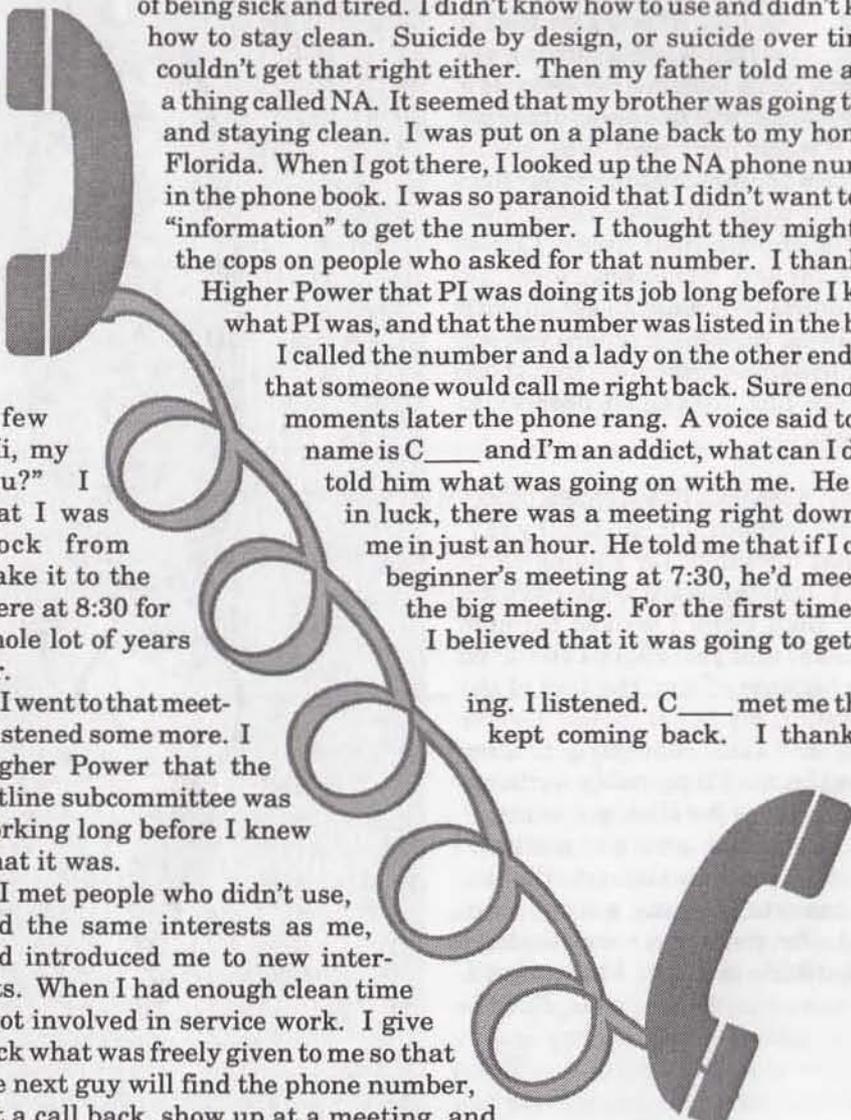
and can now "get on" with our lives. I'm trying to be less selfish today and one of the ways I do that is by helping other addicts stay clean. I do that every time I sit in a roomful of addicts at a meeting, whether I feel like being there or not. When I do that, I help ensure that when a hurting addict comes in begging for help as I did, someone will be there. Imagine what it would have been like if all the addicts who were sitting in your first meeting were off somewhere else, "getting on with their lives." I know that I, for one, would have died. So you addicts who want to get on with your lives, remember where you got those lives, and remember that those who are just coming in deserve to live, too.

Okay, now that I've stepped off my favorite soapbox, I'll end this by saying that my talent for staying clean on my own hasn't grown. It's no larger than when I walked through the doors eight years ago. I've stayed clean because of you, the love of the fellowship, my belief in the Twelve Steps, and God. I'm going to keep coming back. I'll probably write every November because my anniversary time is such a time of gratitude for me that I want to shout my thanks. If I can stay clean, anyone can. Thanks for giving me a way to share my gratitude in print. I love you all.

AD, Florida



On the line



It was a cold winter morning in New York. I was sick and tired of being sick and tired. I didn't know how to use and didn't know how to stay clean. Suicide by design, or suicide over time, I couldn't get that right either. Then my father told me about a thing called NA. It seemed that my brother was going to NA and staying clean. I was put on a plane back to my home in Florida. When I got there, I looked up the NA phone number in the phone book. I was so paranoid that I didn't want to call "information" to get the number. I thought they might call the cops on people who asked for that number. I thank my Higher Power that PI was doing its job long before I knew what PI was, and that the number was listed in the book.

I called the number and a lady on the other end said that someone would call me right back. Sure enough, moments later the phone rang. A voice said to me, name is C___ and I'm an addict, what can I do for you? I told him what was going on with me. He said in luck, there was a meeting right down the block from me in just an hour. He told me that if I could make it to the beginner's meeting at 7:30, he'd meet me there at 8:30 for the big meeting. For the first time in a whole lot of years I believed that it was going to get better.

I went to that meeting. I listened some more. I thank my Higher Power that the hotline subcommittee was working long before I knew what it was.

I met people who didn't use, had the same interests as me, and introduced me to new interests. When I had enough clean time I got involved in service work. I give back what was freely given to me so that the next guy will find the phone number, get a call back, show up at a meeting, and carry on my "last" name: "...and I'm an addict."

ing. I listened. C___ met me there. I kept coming back. I thank my

BB, N Carolina

Temporary sponsor, enduring lesson

Mike* wanted to live. He wanted what we had to offer, but like many addicts he did not know how to ask for it. Mike clung to the edges of the NA Fellowship.

He worked only the first part of Step One (he wasn't using) and the last part of Step Twelve (he tried to help others).

Mike was similar to many addicts. He used for many years, and had increasing family troubles. His beautiful wife was puzzled when he would do well for a while only to return to using. Mike loved his wife and his family as much as he could, given the circumstances.

Getting clean allowed him to move slightly toward realizing the full expression of that love. However, he remained deeply troubled about his life and he expressed feeling "stuck" after being in NA for a couple of years. He began to talk of suicide.

*Not his real name

One day, he asked me to be his temporary sponsor.

I was available to him. We talked on the telephone and I offered insight based on my own experience with recovery. I am careful never to give advice or lecture. I try to encourage discussion of the meaning of the steps, while intermixing writing and praying at various stages.

During the fall of 1991, I decided to press harder with our step work. Mike and I spent about thirty hours over the following fourteen weeks discussing his powerlessness, inventorying his life, and making plans for Ninth Step work. He would brighten at times, only to fall back into defeatism. After all this work, Mike was feeling more pain than he had ever felt before, but he believed he was on the right path. He considered using a counselor or psychiatrist in conjunction with our work. I encouraged him to do so because I had done the same at two years clean. I had found a person who understood the twelve-step recovery process and the miracle involved in arresting the disease of addiction. It worked for me.

During the spring of 1992, I accepted a job in another town and had to relocate. Mike used his pick-up truck to help me move. We made plans to stay in touch and continue our NA work together. We ended up talking a few times and I saw him at an NA camp-out during the summer of 1992. I got busy and we lost touch. Mike wanted to be a clean member of Narcotics Anonymous. Even people who relapse want to get clean. He tried hard, but trying was not enough,

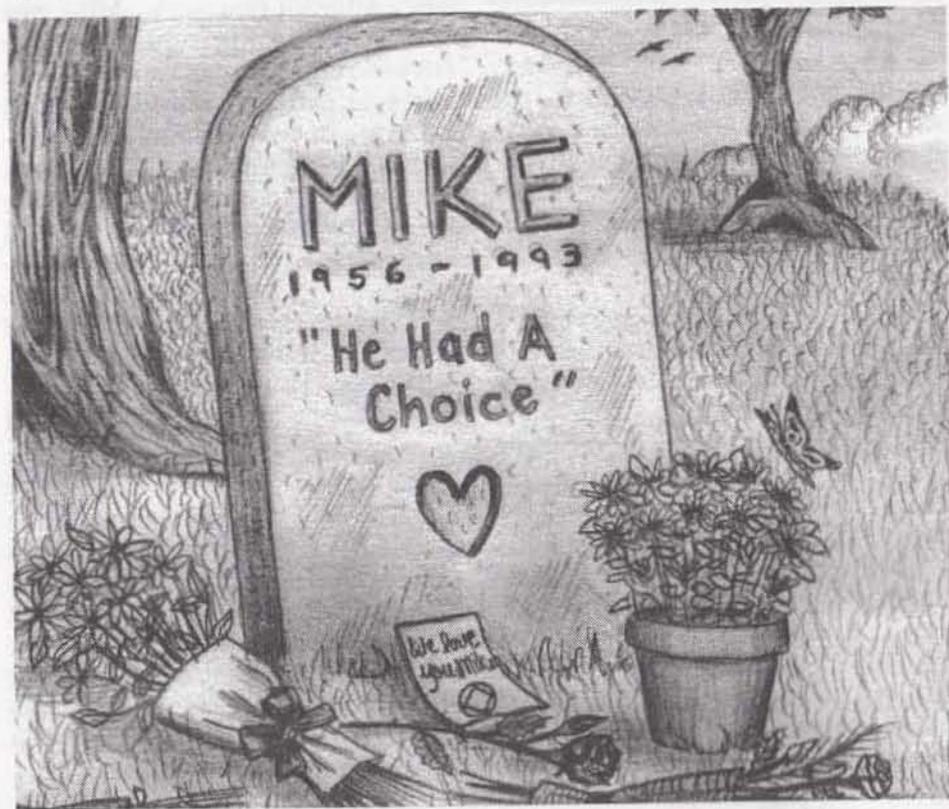
and I lacked the power to push him over the invisible hump to surrender to God. I felt impotent hearing about him, knowing that it could be me that was not "getting it." I knew he was struggling and there was nothing I could do. I visited Mike a few weeks after the camp-out, but he was a closed door. One of the last things he said to me was "Do you think I got a chance?"

Mike died one night. He died like many addicts—alone and a long way from home. I was shocked but not surprised when a mutual friend called late one evening, detailing Mike's overdose. I was sad. I wish it was different.

He had more friends than he could have imagined, and they turned out at his funeral to show their respect for him. About half his pall bearers were NA members. He would have liked that.

I do not blame myself for Mike's death because I do not have the power of life and death over anyone. Mike had a choice. Yet, I could have tried harder. Perhaps being a "temporary" sponsor allowed me to do less. We could have held him closer. He will be missed.

OG, Oklahoma



Becoming

I've heard many people sharing at meetings lately that they want to fit in. At my first meeting I saw old hippies, bikers, young freaks, and men and women with different backgrounds. I could see I belonged because, even with the differences, we were all the same—addicts.

I've attended NA meetings in many different states. I always see addicts much like myself. I always feel safe.

Through sharing my experience, strength, and hope with other addicts I began to know others, and they began to know me. I had to ask myself where my need to fit in came from.

It seems to come from concentrating on and amplifying the differences. When I do that, I become fearful.

What if the people I need so much don't like me? What if they think I'm different from them? Then what will I do?

When I got clean I was almost twenty-three years old. I had a lot of defects. I had no concern for others' feelings. I couldn't even comprehend why they mattered. I looked down on others so I could feel good about myself. I held prejudice toward anyone different.

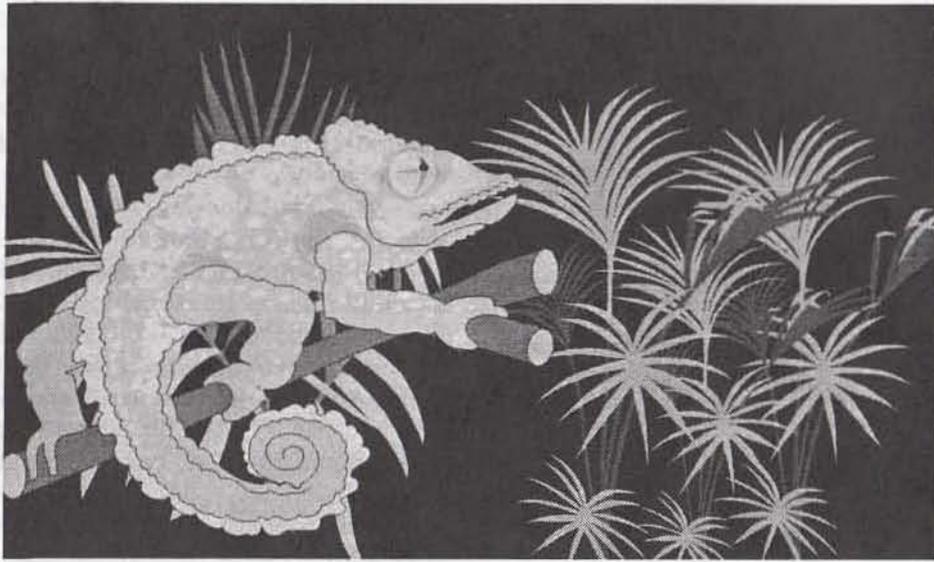
I imagined I knew how others saw me. I had many resentments because of this. I was afraid that what I imagined was true. I denied that I thought this way. I was obsessed with myself.

Many of us come into this fellowship with glaring character defects. We are insecure, fearful, dishonest. I would like to say I never think or act this way, but that would be a lie! After eleven years clean in this program I still have the disease of addiction. I qualify for this fellowship even though I have changed and grown.

I want others to see me as a recovering addict, rather than a sick, hopeless person with no desire to change.

My problems begin when I get vulnerable and say who I am. I'm a person who would rather not have a destructive sexual relationship. I'm a person who will keep his out-of-town sponsor. I'm a person who likes the type of people who are committed to NA service work. I like the type of meetings that aren't in treatment centers or clubhouses. I'm a person who knows his Higher Power works because the God of my understanding is loving, caring, and more powerful than my addiction and myself.

I'm a person who likes reptiles and I've spent thousands of dollars on them. I hate most sports. I like animals and the outdoors. I like motorcycles. I'm a person who has to work hard to learn. I'm learning to be proud of myself and accept others for who they are. I am an addict who has character defects and if you are unlucky it will be proven to you!



This is who I am and I'm proud of it, but now that I've told you it's possible that you will reject me. Of course some people won't like certain parts of me. Those addicts may have a character defect or two.

Step One tells me that I can't change others. Step Two tells me that it is insane for me to attempt to change others. There is a loving God in my life who will help. I work Step Three by choosing to let God help. Step Four is where I learn to look at myself and take my own inventory. Step Five is where I admit the exact nature of my wrongs to myself (break the denial), then others. In Step Six I ask myself if I want to change. In Step Seven I take action. In Steps Eight and Nine I reach out to others, and attempt to correct what I have done wrong. In Step Ten I take my inventory, not others'. In Step Eleven I pray for the courage to do God's will, the courage to be myself, and not to

worry about others not liking me. In Step Twelve I do my best to work these steps in my life so that I can help others.

As long as I'm not hurting myself or others, forcing my opinions or will on you, then my individuality is a freedom that has been given to me by the program.

I must remember open-mindedness is a part of my program. I must listen to others. I must be willing to understand what others are feeling and give them the right to their opinions. I must be honest with myself and others without being insulting. I still need and want to grow in this fellowship. After all, our groups are only as well as the members. May our Higher Power help us all. When we can be at peace with ourselves we can truly give to others without expectations.

JC, Wyoming

Home Group

I love service... So I took on another commitment...



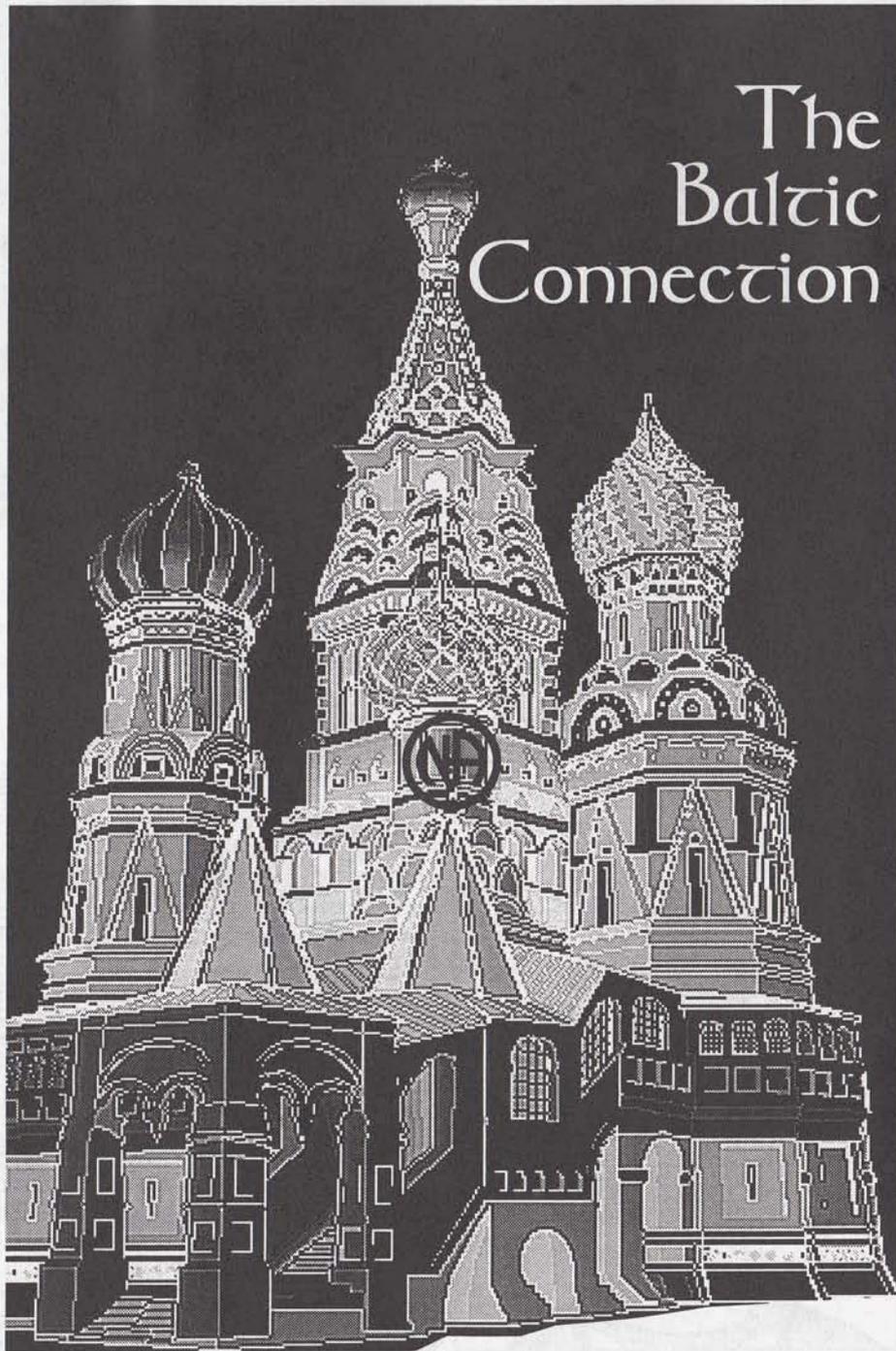
Now I'm a G.S.R., I'm on the Area Activities Committee-I'm on Regional P.I., I have an H.I. Panel, and I'm helping with the convention...



...and ya know...it DOES seem like I'm kinda losing touch with my personal program... **AND MY FRIENDS... AND MY LIFE!!**



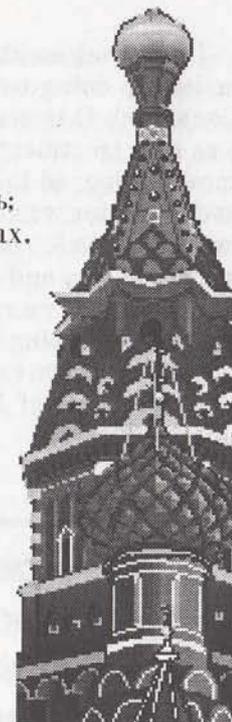
**HOME ALONE GROUP
LOST IN SERVICE**



The Baltic Connection

МОЛИТВА ОВ УМИРТОВРЕНИИ
The Serenity Prayer

Господи
дарй нам ясноты умиротворение,
чтобы принятьто что мы не можем изменить;
мужество чтбы изменитьто, что в наших силах,
и мдрось, чтобы уметьотличить
одно от друго.



I'm an addict from Seattle, Washington. This past August I went on a business trip to Estonia—at least, the original reason for the trip was business, but while I was there I had the opportunity to do some NA service. Those are the parts of my trip that live vividly in my memory. “Intense” is the one-word summary I was using when people asked how my trip was.

A month or so before leaving the US, I called the World Service Office and got the names of NA contacts in the Baltic and Russia. (It seemed likely that getting in touch with NA there wouldn't be quite as simple as just looking in the phone book and calling the helpline. I was really hoping to get to some meetings and meet addicts because I planned to be gone for three weeks and wanted to stay clean and sort of sane.) I wrote to an NA member in Lithuania and another in Latvia—and received replies from both. It was really exciting to get these letters before leaving on my trip; it seemed more believable that I might actually find NA there!

My first stop in Europe was in Cambridge, England, to see my old sponsor (I had lived in England for a year), and to hit a more-or-less familiar meeting before going into new territory. After being in Estonia for a week, I took a couple of days off work to visit Vilnius, Lithuania. I intended to see D, the NA member with whom I had corresponded, and any other members there. I spent many hours talking with D about all sorts of things, related to the program and otherwise. It was really a pretty intense interaction.

I also met another member, and ended up doing two H&I presentations, with D translating. The first was at a treatment center that had recently opened in Vilnius, the second in a detox ward for addicts. This brought up a lot of feelings for me: gratitude, joy, and a great feeling of inadequacy (I'm really the wrong person to be doing this; it should be somebody more experienced, more representative of NA, more something . . .).

There are many things about life in Russia that are hardships.

D was a great translator. I could be looking at the person with whom I was talking, seeing and hearing the expressions and emotions, and the language didn't feel like a big barrier. She was also really good about translating my questions to the other person and translating the reply, even when she knew the answer herself and could have left the other person out. (Recently, I was talking at a treatment center here, on my monthly H&I panel, and it was really nice to say that the month before I had been doing the same thing in Lithuania!)

It turns out I was the first NA visitor there, although they've had a number of AA visitors previously.

They were really glad to have the contact. There is one NA meeting a week in Vilnius, and I was told there is also a group in Kaunas, also in Lithuania. (Unfortunately, I didn't get to Kaunas—another time.) The fellowship there is small—three to four members in Vilnius, plus the group in Kaunas. Before I left, WSO gave me some Russian translations of several IPs and the White Booklet, and I left some copies of these in Vilnius. Also, D has been working hard on translating NA literature into Lithuanian, and we talked about her work on some IPs, the White Booklet, and the Basic Text.

There are also AA and Al-Anon meetings in Vilnius. D is a regular at the AA meetings, she said. In addition to exporting the twelve-step programs, the US has also exported all the hassles about alcohol versus other drugs—something I heard about in one way or another in both Lithuania and Russia. In places like Seattle, newcomers are often encouraged to stick with one program. In a place like Vilnius that would probably be bad advice, since an NA member would really be without enough support.

I took an overnight train to Riga, Latvia, where I visited a second treatment center. One of the residents showed me around, and I talked with some other addicts there. They had started a weekly NA meeting a month ago, elsewhere in the city, which gets addicts from both the treatment center and the city itself. Nobody seemed to know of any NA activity in Estonia, though.

My last NA stop was in St. Petersburg, Russia. D had phoned ahead from Lithuania for me, and I met L at Pushkinskaya, the subway stop nearest the meeting (as in Pushkin the author—I liked going to subway stops named after Pushkin and Dostoevski). St. Petersburg has three NA meetings a week. There were about eight addicts at the meeting we went to that night—pretty much like any US meeting, except for being in Russian. L quietly translated for me.

The next night we had planned to do an H&I presentation at a hospital, but it turned out the hospital was being emptied of addicts due to a diphtheria epidemic. We went to an AA meeting instead (they told me that approximately half the people there also go to NA). I heard that NA got a big boost in St. Petersburg a couple of years ago when somebody in an AA meeting asked all the addicts to raise their hands; then the meeting voted to kick them out. (Addicts talked about drugs and other weird stuff, they smoked too many cigarettes, they wanted their black tea too strong, etc.) This has since changed, and the addicts are back at AA meetings in St. Petersburg, particularly at one daily meeting (the one we went to). Nevertheless, NA is definitely alive as an independent fellowship. L said there were about thirty NA members in the city.

During the next two days I spent many hours with three NA members, other addicts, various kids—it was definitely an immersion in Russian daily life. I ate at one member's

apartment and at another member's house the next day. We did some sightseeing at the Hermitage and St. Isaac's Cathedral. We talked and talked; again it was really pretty intense and emotional for me. Most of my experience was positive, although there were sad things as well. There are many things about daily life in Russia that are hardships. Despite all this, the three of them seemed reasonably happy, taking things one day at a time.

Despite all this, they seemed reasonably happy, taking things one day at a time.

The transitions were disorienting. One day I was in St. Petersburg in the rain, in a house with a leaky roof, almost in the countryside, playing with a three-year-old boy and listening to people talking in Russian in the next room. Then I was sitting on the train from St. Petersburg to Helsinki, eating black bread and drinking goat's milk out of a jar, and the next day I was back home in Seattle.

Mail delivery to and from Russia seems very unreliable. I brought some copies of Russian translations of NA literature with me—it turned out the group there hadn't received two of the three pieces that WSO had

mailed directly. The phones are also unreliable. Many of the pay phones on the street are broken, it's hard to hear sometimes when you do get through, plus long distance to the West is prohibitively expensive for an average Russian. All this leads one to have a great feeling of isolation while there.

Issues about money troubled me a lot during my trip. Not worries about running out of money myself—my trip to Estonia was paid for by others, and most things were cheap—but the huge inequities experienced by people who live there. It started in Lithuania. The normal way to get from Estonia to Vilnius is by bus, which costs maybe \$3 US. However, it's a twelve-hour overnight ride, crossing two borders (i.e., no sleep). I had a nonaddict friend with whom I was going to travel. We had somebody call Estonian Air for us and were told tickets were only \$30, so we made reservations and went to the airport. Zap! First, they'd never heard of us; second, tickets for Westerners were \$260 instead! My friend gave up and headed for the bus station (and found the bus sold out, so he ended up in Riga). Since D was already going to meet us (well, now just me) at the airport I shelled out the money anyway. I can't afford to do this everyday, but it was OK that time. The part that felt weird was that, for a two-day visit, I spent the equivalent of an Estonian's yearly salary.

The money issues felt much stronger in Russia. For example, D had a job and enough money to live on. In

contrast, many members in Russia were unemployed. One member told me that her unemployment benefits were five thousand rubles per month (less than \$5 US) and only lasted for a year.

It's been over two months now since I got back to the US. I had written a long letter to the translations coordinator at WSO about my trip—and was surprised when the *NA Way* editor called me, asking if I could turn it into an article for the magazine.

I'd like to finish up by mentioning some of the gifts of this trip. Probably the biggest one was an increased reliance on a conscious contact with my Higher Power. In Seattle, there are 110 meetings a week, my sponsor, and dozens of addicts I can call anytime (well, at least I could call them if I could only pick up the 500-pound phone). On the trip there were often no accessible meetings, and calling long-distance on the phone was extremely expensive and often difficult. Consequently, I had to rely much more on HP. There was an intimate, personal, intense experience of life with ordinary people in Lithuania and Russia. There was an opportunity to be of service to NA. Finally, there was a strong lesson in how universal are both our disease and our solution—the NA program.

AB, Washington

Newsletters



Where angels are brave enough to tread

From *The Recoverer*, the Washington/North Idaho regional newsletter: I once heard my sponsor say that his sponsees are like angels. Since I had never felt like an angel, I wondered what he meant. I've always felt like the taker in our relationship, not the giver. I have always shied away from sponsorship myself, only saying "yes" to the men I knew would not need me or ask much of me. However, in the last six months, God has put three very inspirational and influential men in my life. Each, in his own way, teaches me something about sponsorship and how to be sponsored.

The first man came to NA late in the summer of '92. Another member had told him to ask me about sponsorship. My first encounter with this man left a negative impression on me. One of those insincere, brash, I'm-going-to-work-the-Twelve-Steps-in-thirty-days types, I thought. When he and I talked, all I could think was, "Come back when you're humble, pal." Instead, I gave him my standard line, "Sit in meetings! Listen! You'll know who to ask!"

Just before heading to the Pacific Northwest Convention in Eugene, he asked me to be his sponsor. I had already tossed aside my initial impressions and had embraced him as "one of us," so I said "yes." While I was away at the convention, he made some bad decisions and relapsed. I hadn't even left the convention before the insidious anti-anonymity network brought the news to me.

I initially took full responsibility. How could I have left him back home? Why didn't he call me first? I'm his sponsor after all! However, I quickly handed the responsibility back to him. Even if I wasn't hundreds of miles away, I had no power or control over his decisions. All I can offer is my experience, strength, and hope, and most of all, my love.

We talk frequently now, if not to each other then at least to each other's

answering machines. I am learning more about communication, that it requires both talking and listening. He is very special to me, a real "Goomba." He is embracing the program and the people who make the program work, and I am one of those people.

The next man refers to me as the "Rock of Gibraltar" or just the "Rock." He is a man who struggles with the idea of being "a man," but is one of the most manly men I know. I watch and listen as he tries to re-sculpt the "macho image" into a feeling, caring person. I have never heard him utter a harsh word about another, nor has he ever repeated the gossip that I'm sure has passed his way once or twice, nor has he ever indulged in the ever-popular inventory taking that so many of us fall prey to.

*I hadn't even left
the convention before
the insidious
anti-anonymity
network brought the
news to me.*

I see him balance the responsibility of single parenthood with the responsibility of recovery and I marvel at the effort involved. Finding the delicate balance between taking care of himself and taking care of his family is not always easy. When I call and ask him if he's going to a meeting and he says he needs to spend time

with the kids, I know that he's making the right decision. Let's face it, the true test of recovery is not at a meeting, but at home, work, and play. This man continues to teach me what strength is all about.

He talks a lot about relationships and I often feel inadequate. Matters are so touchy when you deal with the heart, identifying the difference between love and lust. But what does any one of us know about relationships outside of our own? All I can do is listen and offer advice or opinions, if asked for. Sometimes sponsorship is all about being two ears and two arms.

The most recent member of the team is a man returning to the program with a lot of wreckage to deal with. We had met a couple of times before he left, but I didn't really know him. He called and left a message on my machine upon his return, asking me to be his sponsor. He said he needed someone with whom he could do serious step work. I could think of several men he might want, but not me. I know I've worked the steps; I couldn't have stayed clean and grown without working the steps, but I had never considered myself a "serious step worker."

A few days later, after hanging out with some other addicts, we found ourselves lying on my bed and talking. He ended up telling me his story until five o'clock in the morning. By the time I had moved to my sofa and began to drift into slumber, I knew this man would be an integral part of my life. God does not place people into my life by coincidence; they are

put there because lessons are to be learned.

We have spent much time together since that night. I often wonder if I'm neglecting the other people in my life but, when asked, no one has felt shunned. I became ill shortly after that night and this man spent a great deal of time quite literally at my side. He cared for me, something I do not easily accept. The company and sharing we provided each other was very healing. He has gently reiterated the importance of communion in my recovery: The safety of being held or holding, the camaraderie of a secret no longer kept to oneself, and the joy of sharing our growth.

I go to my own sponsor for consultation over this one, and that has opened the door to be sponsored myself. He has often told me that he learns so much from the men he sponsors. I could see how that was true for his other sponsees, but not for me. I thought the only thing I ever gave him was aggravation, but I truly love him. His insights and knowledge have allowed me to see myself as I have never seen myself before. As I watch those who have chosen to share their recovery with me, I now see how it works for my sponsor. We each have something to teach one another. Like the guiding influence of a sponsor, we all have an angel inside us.

D, Tacoma

We do recover!

From *The Clean Sheet*, the Dallas, Texas area newsletter:

The exclamation point is vital for my recovery. Not a question mark nor a period. It gives me hope and joy. I'm allowed to become excited about my recovery on a daily basis.

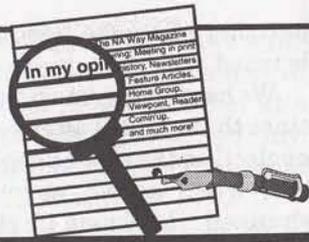
Recovery is more than just not using! It's learning how to live, how to apply the principles and traditions in my life on a minute-to-minute basis, how to accept (I don't have to like it) unacceptable behavior from myself and others.

When I start to feel restless, irritable, and discontent, I need to remember where I came from, that working the steps with a sponsor is essential, and prayer is powerful.

I just need to stay around and watch a miracle happen, and that's what I am—a recovering miracle!

TG

Viewpoint



Editorial reply to "Sexism: not an outside issue"

Sexism, racism, ageism, homophobia—these are some of the character flaws with which our members come to NA. Worse than that, it takes a long time to change through the steps.

The problem I have with "Sexism: Not an Outside Issue" is that it takes other people's inventories. The author takes no responsibility for her own character defects, and encourages other people to write about their negative experiences with this problem. I also encourage people to write about their experience, but I want to hear about solutions—strength, hope, how I as an individual can grow through my insecurities whether they involve being put down or putting others down.

We all have many character defects. I want to be looked upon as a sick but growing addict, rather than a hopelessly sick person with no desire to change. I'm not the person I want to be. I'm not the person I ought to be. But thank God I'm not the person I used to be. I need every one of you.

JC, Wyoming

Personalities before principles?

Before I came to NA, I was accustomed to the attitudes many people had—if you didn't look, talk, act, or think "right," you were shunned or abused. The first time I walked through the doors of Narcotics Anonymous, I was welcomed with open arms. I was finally home.

After I had been around a short while, I became aware of the same attitudes I had known all my life, and it confused me to see these in NA. I felt like giving up on the program, but I couldn't face the alternatives. For once, I didn't run from opposition. The people participating in "personalities before principles" weren't newcomers like myself. I couldn't believe that I knew traditions that they didn't. My sponsor told me to hang in there; it would blow over in time.

It did, but it's still happening to others—the love triangles, not allowing people into homes to attend subcommittee meetings, ideas rejected because of whom they came from . . . the list goes on and on. When are we going to put more emphasis on the traditions? They tell us that unity is essential, we are all equal members, outside issues are to stay on the other side of the doors, and that anonymity is our spiritual foundation. The steps help us as individuals to "get it together." We need the traditions to keep us together!

JP, Iowa

**MEETING
CAPACITY**

**THE SIZE IT'S
MEANT TO BE**

The Thirteenth Tradition

Bigger is better. Medium promotes meaning. Little seems more loving. Do huge groups appear cold and turn into quick handshakes and an exit at the meeting's end? Do medium-sized groups dilute closeness so that no one feels connected, thus killing the home-group concept? Do small groups get sick, breathing their own fetid air beneath a bell jar?

The answer may be found in an unofficial offering of the Thirteenth Tradition: *Each group should be right-sized to meet the needs of its members, newcomers, and visitors who arrive at its door.*

During my early recovery in central Oklahoma, I wanted Narcotics Anonymous meetings to be huge so we could catch up to and overcome Alcoholics Anonymous. I wanted hundred-member groups whose size could verify that NA was not a second-class program, that NA was not a "supplement to the real program of AA," which some members mumbled when NA came to my hometown in 1985.

Thank goodness my attitude changed. I came to believe that NA does not need to overcome any fellowship. It will last if it's meant to be.

However, we did have meetings where sixty to seventy addicts packed our small meeting hall, which was formerly a print shop. We knocked out a wall to create more space and we jammed ourselves in, becoming red-eyed from great clouds of cigarette smoke. Our skin baked from lack of air-conditioning, but we were happy, knowing that NA was working for the first time in our town. The group was right-sized for that stage. Founding members remained busy sponsoring everyone, and newcomers were amazed that a thing like NA existed. Visitors were always welcomed with a dozen hugs.

The newness wore off and we found our meetings becoming medium-sized. About twenty to thirty addicts would gather, with the chairperson asking members to limit their sharing to three minutes so all could speak. Usually no one observed the request, but no one really cared, especially the group's founders. Finally, they could relax and not have to carry the meeting with their sharing. They also could serve less at various trusted servant positions now that a pool of trusted servants existed. The group was right-sized in that it allowed stability and history. Members got what they needed.

The next phase brought the little meeting, which was a welcome event. Now core members knew the group was more stable and they enjoyed relaxing in smaller meetings, per-

haps at noon or during a candlelight session.

In these types of meetings there was less smoke, more sharing time, and less formality. Members seemed to share situations that might not surface during medium or huge meetings. Four or five members around a beaten, wooden table on a frosty winter's night always brings me fond memories of closeness, warmth, and trust.

In retrospect, I can see that our group's size generally adjusted to the right dimension for its development and its NA population.

However, I have noticed some groups get big and cold while medium groups forget their meaning. Little groups can become closed and arrogant. The groups and their members become settled—stuck. They forget the group's main purpose is to create a place where crazy, confused addicts can duck their heads into the door and decide if they want this deal.

Maybe it is not the group's size. I have seen newcomers and visitors not welcomed with a hug or a greeting at groups of all dimensions. Maybe it is the membership of the group. Maybe we (including myself) experience fear. I see an addict arrive at my home group and I sometimes think, "It's not my job to say hello to the addict."

Whose job is it?

I used to want all of our meetings to be mammoth; I now find myself seeking smaller meetings, with less structure. However, given enough time I will search for a medium-sized

meeting to hear addicts who may have more experience than I do and who add to my choices in living clean.

Nothing can replace a mega-meeting where five hundred addicts get together at a camp-out to hear a speaker. The clean-time countdowns at these gatherings are tremendous. Yet each group should be right-sized to meet the needs of its members at any time.

Consequently, whether we like it or not, the group size and its members orient, shape, and offer new members their first impression of NA. I hope we can remember to say hello to each other when we attend meetings—no matter what our size.

I hope I can be aware of my group's size and purpose—to make this thing new each time we meet.

OG, Oklahoma

On funding fun

I feel that it is very important for us to learn to have fun and enjoyment in our recovery, and I feel that this should begin with the NA group or area. My home group is part of an area that is more than a hundred miles from the nearest large city.

Our area spans one hundred square miles; it is difficult to get everyone together for different events. However, we keep trying and are doing quite well. We are growing.

I live in a small resort town, which is abundantly filled with bars, and of course, the usual drugs that are available everywhere. I, and members of my home group, feel it is of the utmost importance to have barbecues, dances, and other events not only to show the newcomer that we can enjoy ourselves without using a drug, but so we can all enjoy ourselves with people who are not using, and our good friends in the fellowship.

Naturally, we occasionally allot a portion of the money we collect from the basket to finance a picnic or get-together of some kind. Our group, five years old this month, has always observed the Fifth Tradition. Our primary purpose is carrying the message. We hold seven meetings a week, always have literature and phone lists available, and we are actively involved in our area. Our meetings average thirty-five people (in a city with a population of 35,000 or so).

Recently, a couple of members have said that the money to hold functions should not come from the basket; that is, the funds should be raised separately. These members cite our traditions. I feel the traditions can be interpreted in different ways. I have seen people split from our group and form new groups because they thought our group was violating traditions despite assurance from world services that our group was within the traditions.

So, I have learned to respect and adhere to traditions, but to be wary of arguing with members who interpret the traditions differently. In these cases, I leave it up to the group's conscience, which always results in a decision that is in the best interest of NA as a whole. Our group still thrives and carries the message quite effectively, I think, despite the opinions of a couple of people who have separated from us. That is their prerogative.

One of these members said that NA was not about giving parties, since our group was getting a reputation as the party group in this area. I vehemently disagree. Of course, holding meetings, buying literature, and upholding the Twelve Steps and Traditions come first—but we have to learn how to enjoy ourselves. If we don't hold functions and entertaining diversions, who will? We are told to avoid slippery places, only hang out with our NA friends, and to change everything. Only a very small percentage of our members objects to using group funds for activities; by the way, I might add that those same members attend activities regularly. If it was all about going to meetings, reading literature, and nothing else, I doubt very much that I would still be here and clean today. Almost everyone in our area and my home group unanimously votes for our functions, and knows that the money to put on these events comes from the basket. They also know that our first obligation is to buy literature and make sure our meeting place is taken care of. We also pass on money to our

area on a regular basis.

Each group is, of course, autonomous, and if we're known sometimes as the party group, I'm proud to belong. Something is working—our members are staying clean, we're growing, and most of all, we're enjoying ourselves in recovery.

Lastly, I am very wary of members who are "NA Nazis" (this could be another entire article). In their eagerness to adhere to the traditions, the addict in them gets carried away, and they go to the other extreme. Their own opinions get mixed in with the traditions, and the personality takes over. For me, the best advice is, "Keep it simple."

BY, Florida



From our readers



Sponsorship and commitment

Hi, my name is Diana, and I am an addict. I'm writing to share my beliefs about getting and using a sponsor.

Early in my recovery I got my first sponsor. She was very tolerant and patient with me. My first sponsor did not waste much time starting me on the steps. We worked Steps One, Two, Three, Four, and Five together. After I had shared my moral inventory with my sponsor and HP, I got scared. I decided I needed a new sponsor.

Over the next nine months I had several sponsors. Any time one sponsor started getting close I'd get a new one. Eventually the pain got bad enough for me to stop sponsor-hopping. I had to realize sponsors were not perfect—nor were they supposed to be baby-sitters.

Finally, I sat back in a meeting and observed some different women. I found one who seemed so spiritual, honest, and open-minded that it scared me. I got the courage to ask her to sponsor me and she said yes. She has now been my sponsor for 3½ years. I know that when I want to change sponsors, I am probably running away from something I don't want to deal with. My sponsor knows that, too. As a matter of fact, some-

times I feel my sponsor knows me better than I know myself.

I could not imagine trying to stay clean, work the steps, and maintain a conscious contact with HP without my sponsor. My sponsor is my friend, sounding board, and a tolerant lady. My sponsor's most frequent reminder to me is, "More will be revealed." Man, do I hate that saying sometimes! I know now from sponsoring people myself how much patience and tolerance it really takes. I never realized how much BS my sponsor put up with until I started sponsoring people. It's like looking in a mirror.

Sponsoring people has played a major part in my recovery as well. It seems like whenever my sponsees call me to talk about an issue, the issue is usually something I need to look at also. Through sponsoring people I've had to call my sponsor more often and work the steps even harder. Before I got clean I couldn't stand other women. Now thanks to NA, my HP, and my sponsor, I have close relationships with other women.

If you don't have a sponsor yet, do yourself a favor and get one. It could be an opportunity for friendship, as well as guidance. Keep coming back!

DB, Illinois

WHO CARES ABOUT THE STEPS?

Of course you do. That's why you're planning on writing an article for *The NA Way* that explains how you feel about changing them.

Those of you who have been subscribers for more than a few months are already familiar with the Motion #39 forum we've been running each month. For those of you who are new subscribers, Motion #39, presented at WSC'93, suggests that where we refer to God as "He" in the steps and traditions, we just say "God."

Because a change of this magnitude directly affects the groups, our elected representatives would like widespread discussion within the fellowship before WSC'95, when the question will arise again.

The NA Way Magazine wants to know how you feel about this issue. The staff and trusted servants responsible for this magazine have pledged to keep access to this column as open as possible. We will publish your thoughts and feelings on the specific wording in Motion #39, other suggestions for changing the steps and traditions, or opinions that the steps and traditions should not be changed at all.

Please share with other *NA Way* readers your views on this very important matter.

Comin' up

Calendar						
	1	2	3	4	5	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

ARIZONA: May 27-29, 1994; 8th Arizona Regional Convention; Tucson; info (602) 290-6710; ARCCNA, PO Box 35055, Phoenix, AZ 85069

2) July 15-17, 1994; 3rd California/Arizona/Nevada Area Convention; Laughlin; info (602) 754-4260; CANAC-3, PO Box 1085, Bullhead City, AZ 86442

ARKANSAS: June 17-19, 1994; 10th Beaver Round-Up Campout; Yellville; info (501) 925-1123; BRC-10, PO Box 23, Lowell, AR 72745

AUSTRALIA: Apr. 3-5, 1994; Australian Regional Convention; Melbourne; info 61-3-417 6472

CALIFORNIA: June 10-12, 1994; San Diego/Imperial Regional Convention; San Diego; info (619) 272-7005; rsvns. (619) 239-4500; SDICRSO-CC, 2260 El Cajon Blvd #184, San Diego, CA 92104

2) June 10-12, 1994; California Mid-State Regional Convention; Visalia; info (209) 625-5057; CMRCRCA, PO Box 2561, Visalia, CA 93279

3) June 11, 1994; Westside Area Birthday Meeting & Dance; Culver City; info (310) 452-3204

4) June 12, 1994; Westside Area Bluesfest; Culver City; info (310) 202-9017; Bluesfest line (310) 306-7108

CANADA - ALBERTA: June 3-5, 1994; 9th Edmonton Area Convention; info (403) 421-4429; EANA-9, Convention Committee, Room 200-9930-106 St, Edmonton, AB,

CANADA - BRITISH COLUMBIA: May 27-29, 1994; 14th Spring Clean Gambier Island Campout; info (604) 322-5967 or (604) 732-1689; VASC, PO Box 1695 Stn A, Vancouver, British Columbia, V6C 2P7

CANADA - NOVA SCOTIA: Aug. 5-7, 1994; 5th Nova Scotia Area Convention; Truro; info (902) 443-2428; NSACNA, PO Box 65, Halifax Central, N.S., Canada, B3J 2L4

CANADA - ONTARIO: Apr. 8-10, 1994; 1st Northwestern Ontario Area Convention; Thunder Bay; info (807) 343-9100; rsvns. (800) 267-2675; NOACNA-1, PO Box 3507, Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada, P7B 6E2

CANADA - QUEBEC: July 1-3, 1994; 4th Canadian Convention; St-Hyacinthe; info (514) 755-2777; CCNA-4, CP 47518, Plateau Mont-Royal, Montreal, Quebec, H2H 2S8

CONNECTICUT: May 21, 1994; 11th Annual Pig Roast Pigs in Space; Quassy Amusement Park; info (203) 344 8296; Pigs in Space, 69 Grand Street, Middletown, CT 06457

2) June 3-5, 1994; 8th Greater Waterbury Area Family Campout; E. Canaan; info (203) 542-6025; GWANA-8, PO Box 1075, Woodbury, CT 06798-0603

FLORIDA: May 27-30, 1994; 4th Gold Coast Area Convention; Pompano Beach; info (305) 832-9518; GCNA-4, PO Box 23325, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33307

2) June 30 - July 4, 1994; 13th Florida Regional Convention; Jacksonville; info (407) 897-2003

3) Oct. 6-9, 1994; 2nd South Florida Regional Convention; Fort Myers; info (813) 575-7751 or (305) 445-4606; SFCRCA-2, PO Box 70155, Ft Lauderdale, FL 33307

GEORGIA: Mar. 31 - Apr. 3, 1994; 13th Georgia Regional Convention; Atlanta; GRCNA-13, PO BOX 190974, Atlanta, GA 31119

GERMANY: May 20-22, 1994; 11th German Speaking Convention; Convention, PO Box 11 10 10, 64225 Darmstadt, Germany

HAWAII: May 27-30, 1994; 8th Annual Big Island Gathering; info (808) 322-1607

IDAHO: May 20-22, 1994; 5th Southern Idaho Regional Convention; Idaho Falls; Convention Committee, PO Box 3704, Idaho Falls, ID 83403-3704

ILLINOIS: May 27-30, 1994; 8th Kickapoo River Run Primary Purpose Area Campout; rsvns. (217) 351-1678; helpline (217) 373-2063

INDIANA: May 27-30, 1994; North Central Indiana Area Convention; Milford Convention, PO Box 1052, Elkhart, IN 46515

KANSAS: Apr. 8-10, 1994; 11th Mid-America Regional Convention; Great Bend, info (316) 343-7740 or (913) 823-3854; MARCNA-11, PO Box 242, Salina, KS 67402-0242

KENTUCKY: Apr. 1-3, 1994; 8th Kentucky Regional Convention; Louisville; hotel (800) 333-3333; KRCNA-8, PO Box 14271, Louisville, KY 40214-0271

LOUISIANA: May 27-29, 1994; 12th Annual Louisiana Regional Convention; Alexandria; rsvns. (318) 442-9000, (800) 523-9724; LRCNA-12, Program Committee, PO Box 762, Montgomery, LA 71454

MARYLAND: Apr. 8-10, 1994; 8th Annual Chesapeake/Potomac Regional Convention; Ocean City, MD; rsvns. (800) 654-5440; CPRC-8 Conv Committee, PO Box 44490, Fort Washington, MD 20749-4490

2) Sep. 1-4, 1994; WCNA-24; Workshop speakers needed, deadline—Apr. 1, 1994; submit tapes to; WCNA-24, c/o WSO Inc., PO Box 9999, Van Nuys, CA 91409

MASSACHUSETTS: May 6-8, 1994; 7th Martha's Vineyard Area Celebration of Recovery; info (508) 627-6049 or (508) 693-7155; MVACCNA-7, PO Box 2754, Vineyard Haven, MA 02568

MICHIGAN: Mar. 31.-Apr. 3, 1994; 2nd Detroit Area Convention; Detroit; info (313) 361-4214; rsvns. (800) 228-3000; DACNA, Tickets and Registrations, PO Box 241221, Detroit, MI 48224

MINNESOTA: Apr. 22-24, 1994; 1st Minnesota Regional Convention; Saint Paul; info (612) 926-7341; MNNAC-I, PO Box 14152, Minneapolis, MN 55414-0152

2) May 27-30, 1994; 11th Upper Midwest Regional Convention; phoneline (701) 234-9330; UMRCA-11, PO Box 174, Fargo, ND 58107-0174

NETHERLANDS: July 22-24, 1994; 11th European Convention and Conference; Amsterdam; info 31 20 665 9810; ECCNA-11, Postbus 11976, 1001 GZ, Amsterdam, Netherland

NEVADA: July 15-17, 1994; CANAC-3; Laughlin; info (602) 754-4260; CANAC-3, PO Box 1085, Bullhead City, AZ 86442

NEW HAMPSHIRE: June 24-26, 1994; 4th Granite State Area Fellowship in Field Campout; Bethlehem; helpline (603) 432-0166; Campout 4, PO Box 4354, Manchester, NH 03108

NEW JERSEY: Aug. 19-21, 1994; 4th Northern New Jersey Regional Convention; Parsippany

NEW YORK: May 20-22, 1994; 9th Greater New York Convention; info (718) 398-0012; rsvns. (800) 431-3850

NORTH CAROLINA: Apr. 22-24, 1994; Greater Charlotte Area Convention; hotel (704) 525-8350 or (800) 847-7829; Bound for Freedom, 1620 S Boulevard, Suite A, Charlotte, NC 28203

2) May 20-22, 1994; 4th Twin City Area Convention; Winston-Salem; rsvns. (800) 325-3535; Twin City Area Convention, PO Box 12475, Winston-Salem, NC 27117-2475

OHIO: May 27-19, 1994; 12th Annual Ohio Convention; The Ohio convention is in Kentucky, five minutes from downtown Cincinnati; info (513) 820-2947; OCNA-12, PO Box 0541, Cincinnati, OH 42501-0541

OKLAHOMA: Apr. 8-10, 1994; 8th Oklahoma Regional Convention; Oklahoma City; info; OKRCNA-8, PO Box 804, Bethany, OK 73008-0804

2) June 17-19, 1994; 13th Clean & Crazy Campout; Lake Tenkiller; info (405) 521-8531; Clean & Crazy Campout, 500 East Steinson #20, Norman, OK 73072

OREGON: May 6-8, 1994; Mid-Willamette Valley Area Convention; rsvns. (503) 370-7888; ASC, PO Box 13232, Salem, OR 97309

PORTUGAL: Apr. 22-24, 1994; 4th Portuguese Regional Convention and Conference; Inatel of Foz do Arelho; info 1-442-5200; CCPNA-4, Apartado 21785, 1138 Lisboa Codex, Portugal

SCOTLAND: May 20-22, 1994; 3rd Scotland Convention; Edinburgh; SCNA-3, PO Box 235, Edinburgh, Scotland, EH6 8JW

TENNESSEE: May 20-22, 1994; 6th Multi-regional Bar-B-Que and Campout; Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park, North of Memphis; rsvns. (901) 452-1091

UNITED KINGDOM: Apr. 8-10, 1994; 5th London Convention; Holland Park School, London; LCNA-5, PO Box 1980, London, England, N19 3LS

WASHINGTON: Apr. 15-17, 1994; 9th Washington/N Idaho Regional Convention; Spokane; rsvns. (800) 547-8010; WNIRCNA-9, PO Box 9245, Spokane, WA 99209

WEST VIRGINIA: May 6-8, 1994; 11th West Virginia Convention; Ripley; info (800) 766-4442; rsvns (304) 372-7860; Mountaineer RSC, PO Box 2381, Morgantown, WV 26502-2381

2) July 29-31, 1994; 8th Almost Heaven Area Convention; Shepherdstown; info (304) 725-6812; AHACNA-8, PO Box 3329, Martinsburg, WV 25401

WISCONSIN: Apr. 15-17, 1994; 9th Mid-Coast Convention; Delavan; info; MCC-9, PO Box 1621, Janesville, WI 53545

WYOMING: Sep. 23-25, 1994; Unity Convention; 3 speakers needed, respond by February; info (307) 789-7746; Unity Convention, 855 Sundance Ave, Evanston, WY 82930

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The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous

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 be 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. Narcotics Anonymous 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 films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Twelve Traditions reprinted for adaptation by permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.

What is Narcotics Anonymous?

NA is a nonprofit fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs has become a major problem.

We are recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean.

This is a program of complete abstinence from all drugs. There is only one requirement for membership,

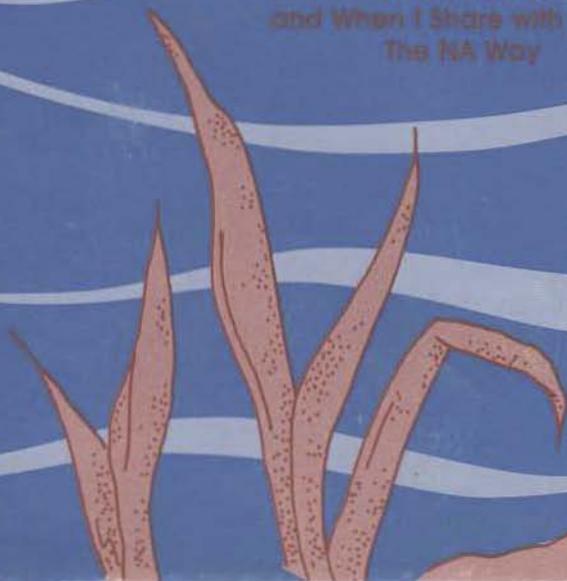
the desire to stop using. We suggest that you keep an open mind and give yourself a break.

Our program is a set of principles written so simply that we can follow them in our daily lives.

The most important thing about them is that they work.



My Gratitude Speaks
When I Care
and When I Share with Others
The NA Way

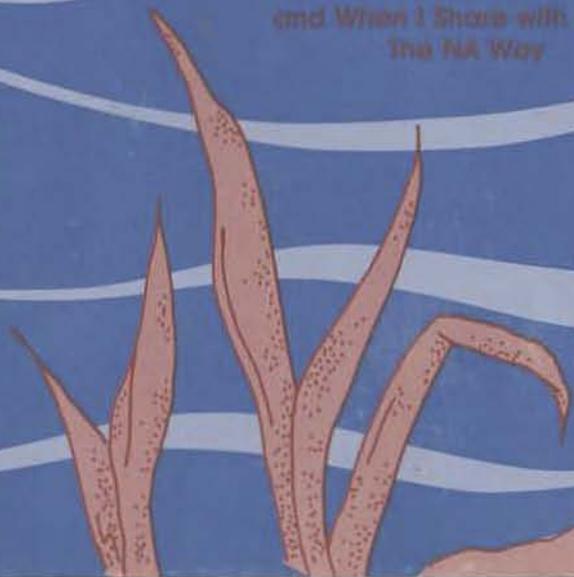


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