

My Gratitude Speaks . . . .  
When I Care  
And When I Share  
With Others  
The N.A. Way.

THE  
N.A.  
WAY

MAY 1983

# N.A.

N.A. is a non-profit fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. We are recovered addicts who meet regularly to help each other to stay clean. This is a program of complete abstinence from all drugs. There is only "One" requirement for membership, the honest desire to stop using. There are no musts in N.A., but 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".

*Editorial Council*

MEMBERS — GROUPS  
— SERVICE COMMITTEES —

Let the 70's Year help you carry the message...

Reprints & Bulk Orders

10000 Single Copies — \$1.00

25000 Single Copies — \$2.00

100000 Single Copies — \$7.00

N.A. Inc., P.O. Box 127, New York, NY 10007

DEAR SUBSCRIBERS,

This is the last issue of the 'N.A. Way' that will be produced with a Lisbon, Ohio mailing address. We will maintain this P.O. Box for 6 months and forward all magazine correspondence to the new address. See new address below and on page 20.

Please renew your subscription previous to the month and year beside your name and address on the mailing label.

Please encourage fellow members to subscribe and/or become bulk distributors for the 'N.A. Way'. This is *your* magazine — *Your* help is needed for the growth and survival of the 'N.A. Way'.

*Editorial Committee*

**MEMBERS — GROUPS  
— SERVICE COMMITTEES —**

Let the 'NA Way' help you carry the message...

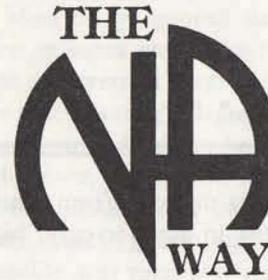
*Become a Bulk Distributor*

**10 to 49 Single Copies - \$1.25 Ea.**

**50 or More Single Copies - \$1.00 Ea.**

Send PREPAID Orders to:

'N.A. Way', P.O. Box 93, Follansbee, WV 26037



**MAY  
1983**

VOLUME 1

NUMBER 9

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Freedom from Addictive Thinking .....	6
Not Magic .....	9
Just for Today .....	10
Still Alive and Well .....	11
Attaining Total Abstinence .....	13
To an N.A. Area Committee .....	15
Total Surrender .....	18
Communique on Communication .....	19
Letters from Our Readers .....	20

*Please mail all articles, subscriptions  
input, questions and letters to:*

The N.A. Way Magazine  
Post Office Box 93  
Follansbee, West Virginia 26037

The N.A. Way presents the experiences and opinions of N.A.s. Opinions expressed herein are not to be attributed to Narcotics Anonymous as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply any endorsement by either Narcotics Anonymous or the N.A. Way.

© 1983 The N.A. Way

Permission to reprint from this publication is granted to all other service boards and committees of the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous.

## Freedom from Addictive Thinking...

I am a recovering addict, alive and free, a living miracle. From a hopeless, lost junkie to a learning, growing clean addict in a not-so-easy, *big* First Step.

"Never Alone": to first hear those words that applied to me, to find others just like me, to finally understand what addiction means, to know that drugs were only a major *symptom* of this disease...I released my drug identity for recovery from addiction.

My denial found a paradox when I came to Narcotics Anonymous. In our area, I was unlike others in my favorite drug and how I used it. I was a "shooter" in a meeting full of smokers, drinkers and pill-takers and found it hard to identify. The "bottoms" they spoke of were mere setbacks in my history. Today I believe my denial was so strong that I needed many more outside influences to surrender. My feelings were the same as the other members, only it seemed to take more to reach me.

The first meetings I attended were new and uninformed. N.A. was a place where people came to talk about drugs. We had very little literature and no exposure to greater N.A. Most members belonged to two or more Anonymous Fellowships and believed that Traditions were for those who had all Twelve Steps down-pat. My disease "fed into" being different-from by comparing experiences rather than feeling empathy.

How could *they* understand me? I shot drugs, only another "shooter" could know how I felt like an outcast from society; a non-human. We had to go to greater lengths to get *our* drugs; *extreme* criminal and anti-social acts. I believed that after taking that first fix, I'd become lost beyond help of medical science, family and society; a hopeless moral leper. My experience told me that junkies died or went to jail, recovery was just a dream. Oh, how my disease wanted me to believe this. That part of my addiction that cries for failure fell into selective-listening. Occasionally, the feelings expressed by another member would touch me, bringing my tears near the surface.

When they spoke from the heart, unrehearsed words, honesty sharing, it rang true. My self-obsession, fearing rejection, would keep me silent until the moment was lost. When the talk returned to drugs, sharing was okay because I knew about drugs. Some members were bold enough to open meet-

---

*"My self-obsession...  
kept me silent..."*

---

ings by reading from a little N.A. booklet. They said Narcotics Anonymous was unlike any drug program and different from other Anonymous Fellowships. Most of us ignored these "boat-rockers". *Who cared anyway*; those first few minutes were to settle in, get coffee, and think of what we were going to say, weren't they?

After a devastating relapse, the person my God chose to reach me through my denial turned out to be the only other "shooter" in our local Fellowship. However, this person was one of *those* who wanted to read out of that little white booklet and talk about the Steps. This person was the subject of much critical gossip and becoming socially unpopular. To me, social acceptability was recovery, yet that "recovery" had failed to keep me clean. This person liked to read "Who, What, and How it Works" in meetings and kept saying "we are not interested in what or how much you used, who your connections are, or what you have done in the past, but only in what you want to do about your problem and how we can help".

Personal understanding of these concepts came to me in a hospital meeting. The newcomers there had gone beyond the bottom. I tried desperately to reach them, wanting to explain that the lie was dead, but just couldn't find the words. How could I give away what I didn't have? I wanted to share that we are all the same, we feel the same inside, but they seemed only to hear the differences.

This was when my big search began. A sincere desire to share recovery led me to find the missing idea that would explain it all to me so I could give it away. This search took me to every anonymous fellowship and even one that tried to combine them all. Feelings and unconditional love were an important element in this search, but they were just not enough to fill up that empty place inside. I was starting to see how simple abstinence was not enough. Old patterns were still running my life. I no longer used drugs, but still used people, places and things. I still sought social acceptability. I gauged how good I should feel about myself by how others appeared to feel about me. That hospital meeting haunted me. I knew those people were still using and some of them were dead or dying. Why couldn't we reach them and why was I still clean? I knew my God was working in me, but faith alone had never kept me clean this long.

On the night of my nine month anniversary, two special members attended our N.A. meeting. They had just returned from a distant N.A. convention. I expected to hear all about the fun they had experienced. I listened with open ears. Instead, they introduced themselves very simply as *addicts* and shared the surrender they had found. With peace and serenity, they shared about addiction as a disease, that our reaction is what makes us addicts, not what or how much we used. They shared that addiction affects every area of our lives and abstinence is not recovery. They talked about freedom from addiction and more. They talked about growth away from addictive thinking. They shared more honestly than I'd ever experienced before. They continued to share the truth despite rejection and indifference. Their

personalities and drug histories suddenly didn't matter any more. My search was over. I truly *felt* the message and wanted what *they* had found. At this meeting I stood up for my nine month birthday. One of these members gave me an N.A. coin. This was the first time I'd ever seen one. My answer was inscribed on that coin, "...no addict need die..." from addiction. I was very simply an addict. I'd found my First Step to recovery; not powerlessness over drugs, powerlessness over addiction. There was finally hope, and help and freedom. It really didn't matter who or what I'd done, only what I wanted to do now. They helped us end our meeting differently — with hugs rather than hand-holding. The last thing they said was..."work the Steps or die...". That was the beginning.

My God has brought many people into my recovery; addicts seeking help, from all walks of life, of all sizes, shapes and colors, only to reinforce our basic sameness. The symptoms may have been different, the feelings are the same, we are all alike.

I still feel especially drawn to the "shooters" I recognize at meetings or conventions. My need to share with newcomers suffering from chemical denial is great. Denial kills and N.A. can give life.

I thank my God and Narcotics Anonymous for giving me truth and life and empathy. I never have to use again and I never have to *feel alone* again.

## ADDICTION, NOT DRUGS

*What I've learned is right, but wrong*

*Where I've been I stayed too long,*

*Who I am is really who I'm not*

*How it works, well I've missed alot,*

*The truth I know is really half a lie*

*Through denial, though, I had to try.*

*Beliefs I have I must now throw away*

*Subject to change are the words I say,*

*Things I see now I did not see then*

*Through a new awareness is how it began,*

*Honesty of a kind has penetrated my wall*

*I'm beginning to learn to surrender to it all.*

## NOT MAGIC...

In the late nineteen thirties, a system of twelve observations were written down. These simple observations included time-honored ideas common to many disciplines and faiths. People concerned with character building had used these concepts for centuries. Many of the principles of this system seemed confusing or even outrageous. It just doesn't seem logical that admitting a problem had defeated us, could bring relief from that problem. It's not easy to believe complete freedom can come through total dependence on some unseen Spirit. And how could giving something away result in getting more of it? These puzzling ideas were the basis upon which a group of people who society had thought hopeless, were building miraculous new lives. Their personalities had changed as they did these things in order: admitted, surrendered and gave it away. As a result of this order grew from chaos, hope sprang from despair, even life blossomed from the grip of death. Some thought a magic formula had been found, but the truth was that they only wrote down what happened during the realization of a miracle. No magic was involved. Nothing really new had been said or written — just a new application of these concepts in the lives of a special group of people. The system worked for

these people because it was just an observation of what did work. There was and is nothing special about the system itself; these dozen ideas only describe how something happens in people's lives. These observations may even be incomplete, after all, they are only our human attempt to explain the Spiritual. Some Greater Power actually does the work: this system is just

**"...the realization  
of a miracle..."**

our human attempt to describe the steps we take to co-operate with that Power. We are human and therefore fallible — our system is probably imperfect and subject to modification as we learn more of this Spirit. But...it works, and that's all that really counts.

This system has been adapted, changed, universalized, validated, mistakenly quoted, and altered in translation. An adaptation of this system, the components of which have been used by many people for many things for many centuries works for us today. Twelve Steps were originally written as an observation of how people abstained from one of the chemical symptoms of the disease of addiction. These principles allowed continued abstinence and some recovery.

Eventually Twelve Steps were

applied to other chemical symptoms and people found that what worked for one chemical symptom would work for any symptom. In the early fifties, the first Narcotics Anonymous members adapted the Twelve Steps to the form we now know. I'm not sure how the adaptation process took place, or how the words were arrived at, but I live the result. I'm alive today as a result of the truth of N.A.'s First Step. I could not admit to powerlessness over drugs. I needed to admit I was powerless over the reason I used drugs. I had to accept my powerlessness over addiction in order to stop using drugs. The disease of addiction is truly more powerful than me. Today, I accept the reality of my powerlessness over this disease; addiction. How very monumentally important one simple word can be.

## WHAT IS REAL?

To awake is real  
To love is real  
To expect is real  
To hurt is real  
To cry is real  
To grow is real  
This is why I must  
Always ask my God  
to Make me real  
Even when I wish  
not to be.

## JUST FOR TODAY

Today I don't choose to hide inside my addiction. I reach out wholeheartedly to the recovery available for my disease (the N.A. Fellowship and it's members). I have to; because my disease is a disease that tells me 'I don't have one'. I must surround myself with people who know me, understand my disease, know my denial, and how it can destroy me. My disease affects all areas of my life, but I choose to take positive actions toward recovery from it. I willingly continue to grow and change by reaching out to new goals, making new mistakes, and breaking old patterns. My thinking must be geared toward positive change and action; working the Steps and letting go to surrender, living in today for all it's worth by not putting any falsehoods in or taking any truth out. I seek to accept my reality as just that...*reality*, by listening to others' experience, strength and hope, and taking honest suggestions.

Today, realizing that my drug use was just a symptom of my addiction, I know I cannot recover by mere abstinence from all drugs. Today I choose to have recovery from my disease by working the Twelve Steps of N.A. My life depends on it. I'm free to recover from this disease "Just for Today"... "The N.A. Way".

## Still Alive and Well...

Despite the rumors, facts, and speculations which you may have heard recently, *Narcotics Anonymous is alive and well*; in fact, it seems to me that N.A. is doing better and growing more than ever.

At this point, you're probably thinking "Where's this person coming from?" "They must be naive or uninformed, don't they know about what's happening?" Well, maybe you're right, I probably am naive because I choose to live my life as positively as I can instead of focusing on the negative and becoming panicky like I used to. I probably am uninformed and misinformed. I've heard and read about problems in our WSO, our WSB and our WSC, and our Conference Committees. I've heard about Regional problems, Area problems and Group problems. I've heard about service structure problems, unity problems, spin-off problems, problems with other programs and problems caused by members off on some tangent or caught up in people, places, things or self. I've heard bushel baskets full of problems from here, there and everywhere. However, most of what I hear is second, third, fourth or tenth hand information.

I'm not saying that we don't have any problems or that the things I've heard are just paranoia or overactive imaginations. In fact, I believe that most of what I've

heard is probably very real and that there's probably a whole lot of problems we're not even aware of yet. What I am saying is that maybe I don't look at these problems the same way some of the people I've talked to lately seem to. *I'm grateful for our problems.*

When we have problems in our fellowship, I don't get upset the way I used to. I'm actually more concerned when everything seems to be going too smoothly. My big concern about our problems is that they so often cause panic and blind our members (new and old) to the joy and hope of recovery.

For me, problems have usually motivated or accompanied growth. I'm an addict and problems seem to be a part of my addiction.

**"...problems have usually motivated growth..."**

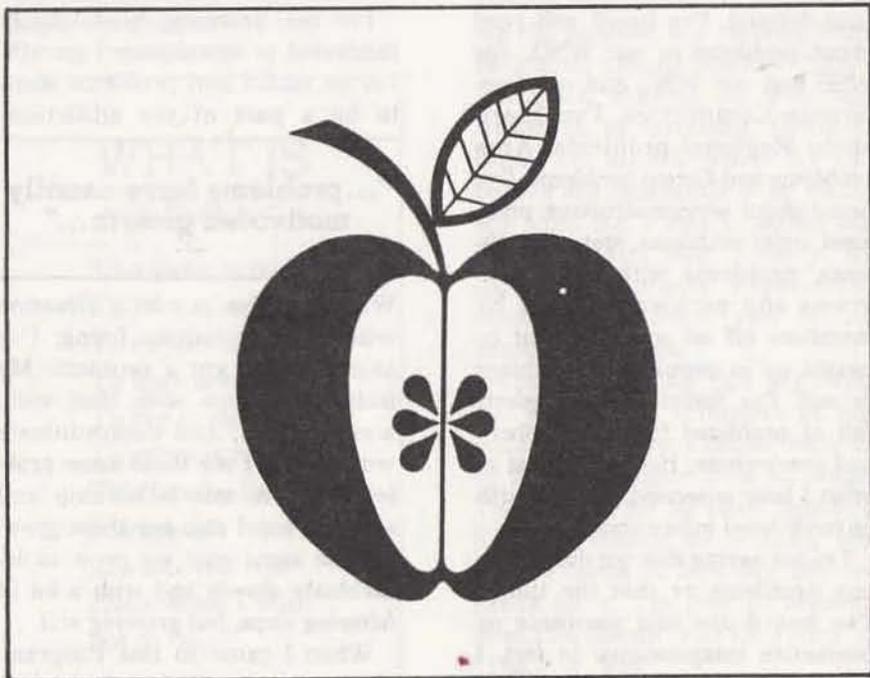
Whenever I'm put in a situation with another human being, I've automatically got a problem: My inability to cope with, deal with, accept, trust, and communicate with others. I see these same problems within our fellowship and services, but I also see them growing the same way we grow as individuals; slowly and with a lot of faltering steps, but growing still.

When I came to this Program, there were probably less than

twenty N.A. meetings in the world, and maybe 100 or 200 N.A. members. Today there are probably 20 local N.A. fellowships this size or larger. When I was new, our service structure consisted of two or three committees and whoever had the literature in the trunk of their car. Today, there are literally hundreds of service committees working to help make our fellowship better. No wonder it sometimes seems that we have so many more problems today; after all, we've only grown 100 times in the last 10 years or so. Things seem bigger and more complicated because there are a lot more people. Communication is a lot harder because three-fourths of the members of N.A. don't see each other and share with each other in meetings on a daily or at least weekly basis.

Many of the things which we see only as problems may really be symptoms of our fantastic growth.

There is one more thing that convinces me that N.A. is alive and well, and that I need have no fear about our fellowship. This is: N.A. is a spiritual program, and ultimately very personal in nature; our Program is principles and people. Spiritual principles are indestructible and attacks on spiritual principles are futile. Narcotics Anonymous is something that each of us carries within. So long as any of us are clean and living life based on our principles, Narcotics Anonymous will be alive and flourishing. It can't be any other way; the success and growth of our Program is built into the principles upon which it is based.



---

## Attaining Total Abstinence

---

In the last few months, I've had an experience which strengthened my Faith.

When I was very young and had been using for a while, my parents took me to a psychiatrist. They didn't understand the disease of addiction and wanted to "fix me". I think they thought I was crazy and I knew *something* was wrong with me. I didn't feel "normal" like I thought other people must feel. I wasn't happy with my life and hadn't been for a long time — even before I started using.

The doctor diagnosed me as manic-depressive and prescribed anti-depressants. I continued to use other drugs and failed to mention this to my doctor.

When I came into this Fellowship, I didn't know what to do about my prescribed medication. I went to different doctors who knew about the disease of addiction, and got several different opinions about my "need" for the prescribed medication.

Although I used the drugs as prescribed, I felt guilty and questioned my use of them.

I looked for reassurance from doctors, my parents, friends, and other recovering addicts. I wanted them to tell me it was okay for me to use this prescribed medication. No one condemned me for using medication, but some suggested I might want to "check it out" — to

try not using while under a doctor's care and see what happens.

At first, I only listened to the people who told me it was okay to take the medicine. I could accept giving up my street drugs, but not my prescribed medication. I *thought* they were so essential to my functioning, that I would kill myself or someone else if I did not use them. I rationalized that my doctor knew what he was doing because he was a doctor.

As I went to more meetings and heard of other members' experiences, my doubts and confusion became unbearable. My fear of

---

**"I felt stronger, more free  
and more capable..."**

---

being without medication wasn't as bad as my growing discomfort and doubt.

With the love, understanding and support offered by fellow members, I decided to turn this problem over to my Higher Power and took the necessary steps to get completely clean. I wasn't sure what would happen, but I finally had enough faith in my God to let go.

I'd been on medication for years and although I'd been told that

my medications were not "physically addicting", I know now that I was addicted to them. For the first few weeks of my detox off the medications, I looked for signs of abnormality or depression. I soon found that I did fine without the medicines. In fact, without them, I felt stronger, more free and

more capable. The terrible breakdown I expected just never occurred.

I'm so grateful for those who suggested I just try. Their love, care and concern has helped free me from feeling guilty or unique. They helped me do the footwork to release my medical denial.



## STARTING ALL OVER AGAIN

We're starting all over again

Looking back to see where we've been,  
It's sure an ugly sight that we see

If we don't change now, we'll never be free,  
Free to face the life that's for us

It seems our God's will, in that we can trust,  
We're starting all over again

Dying so that we may begin,  
A new and better life that's ahead

Walls we hide behind may be shed,  
We're learning a new way to live

A way to love and a way to give,  
For each other we are learning to care

Our sorrows and joys we are learning to share  
We're starting all over again

Now a life we never had, may begin.

## To An N.A. Area Committee...

I write this with love, care and concern. It warms my heart to see an N.A. Area Service Committee emerge. More addicts will find Narcotics Anonymous and live free due to your efforts. More Groups will grow healthy and flourish, and you yourselves will grow in understanding of our Program; the Traditions and the Steps.

Sometime ago, a Trusted Servant of your Area called me with some questions. Your Trusted Servant knew that I had participated in and observed the emergence, formation and development of several Area Service Committees and asked me to share my experience. I was grateful for the opportunity. I've seen lots of Areas get caught up in policies and procedures that have compromised our Primary Purpose and Common Welfare. I pray that the following can help.

*My best experience/observation is this...all of our service problems can be resolved through recovery from addiction.* The First Step of the Narcotics Anonymous Program leads us to surrender and provides the basis for personal recovery. Our Program, based on this First Step, is unique among self-help groups and anonymous fellowships. Our Program deals with the problem, not the symptoms. We can never stress or re-emphasize this too much. People may abstain for months, and even years and remain oblivious to this subtle yet monumental difference. The primary responsibility of those of us who have chosen to express our gratitude through structural service, is to recover from addiction and *share our recovery from addiction.* We serve N.A. by attending N.A. meetings, basing our recovery exclusively in Narcotics Anonymous. We read and share recovery found in N.A. literature. We sponsor our newcomers into N.A. To share other principles may mean that we have not surrendered to our powerlessness over the disease of addiction and we are not serving N.A. Time abstinent means little or nothing here. We may only effectively serve the Program we are personally committed to.

There is no power or control in service. Those two concepts are mutually exclusive. Sincere surrender, willingness to act, and Prayer and Meditation lead us to be of real selfless service; "doing the right thing for the right reasons". "...One thing will defeat us in our recovery" *and in our service,* "an attitude of intolerance or indifference toward Spiritual Principles".

My experience tells me that the several *critical spiritual principles in structural service* are:

- 1) *Surrender* — personal powerlessness over the disease of addiction: the 1st Step of N.A., the basic premise of the message of recovery from addiction that we share in our Primary Purpose.
- 2) *Our Second Tradition* — defining who we serve; our Ultimate Authority as expressed through Group Conscience...and defining who we are: Trusted Servants who do not govern.

- 3) *Our Ninth Tradition* — provides for any and all N.A. structural services and tells us quite explicitly how to structure services: so that they are Directly Responsible to those they serve. Simplicity promotes effectiveness.
- 4) *Our First Tradition* — personal recovery is dependent on N.A. Unity, therefore, we work for our Common Welfare. We inform, we *communicate*, we write it down so that we may give it away in order to keep it.
- 5) *Our Fifth Tradition* — the reason we have N.A. services; so that no addict need die without having the chance to recover. As service committees, we work to make the N.A. message; *recovery from addiction*, more generally available and help Groups to fulfill our Primary Purpose.

We, as addicts, often treat Spiritual Principles as rules and defiantly search for ways to work around them, in our attitude of indifference or intolerance. We perceive service titles and committee participation as positions of power, prestige and control, we may even become so radically self-obsessed that we attempt to manipulate the conscience of Groups. We forget that services are directly responsible to Groups and members, not the other way around. Energy, enthusiasm and misinformation lead us to believe that we alone know what's best for N.A. Sometimes the very worst violation of our Spiritual Principles comes from the very best of intentions. I know, I've been there. Experience and observation have taught me to reach out, share my problems and ideas, ask for help, Pray and Meditate, take direction and then to proceed *humbly*.

Several Basic Concepts that come from my experience in Area Service are...

- 1) *Anonymity* — In records of Area meetings, it seems much more appropriate to refer to reports, motions, and discussion in terms of the Group represented or the service specialty instead of the personality...example:  
*The Sat. Nite Recovery Group GSR moved that: "our ASC define a prudent reserve as one month's operating expenses and pass all remaining funds on to our RSC according to our 7th Tradition."*  
rather than...  
*Joe Blow moved that: "We save all money in our treasury for a yearly party."*  
The second half of our name is Anonymous...we as Trusted Servants can encourage anonymity by participating in it.
- 2) *Recovery* — Perhaps the very best activity I've seen an ASC sponsor is a *Twelve Step Retreat*.
- 3) *Trusted Servant Training* — Each Trusted Servant should have one or two alternates, just as Group representatives, to learn how to perform the required service effectively and help us as service committees to not continue to make the same mistakes over and over.  
*Seminars or Learning Days* — These allow us to share the experience of others from outside our Area who have lived through service experiences and learned how to apply the Spiritual Principles in the Traditions of N.A.

- 4) *Simplicity* — Our Service Manual shares the latest, most effective basics of setting up an Area Service Committee. It seems that the more simply services are structured, the more effective and directly responsible they become.
- 5) *Communication* — Verbal messages are often misunderstood or misinterpreted. Part of the willingness to serve is the willingness to report or represent *accurately*. All reports, motions and other important information should be written. That way, misunderstanding and misinformation due to poor communication is minimized. If we want Unity, we must communicate effectively, *write it down simply and share it*.
- 6) *Flexibility and Humor* — Area Committees serve according to the needs of their member Groups. When we take ourselves too seriously and form intricate rules of service our Groups seem to treat us as governing bodies and refuse to participate.

Area Service is a learning experience. Some of us may succeed to manipulate and control for some time. Eventually, however, our Ultimate Authority will guide us to truly serve if we are recovering from addiction. The Spiritual Principles in our Steps and Traditions are pure. The truth of Recovery from the disease of addiction is patient, but powerful. Narcotics Anonymous can save lives through our dedicated selfless service, commitment and follow-through. It's free for the Surrender.

---

## REFLECTIONS

*Smiles and tears on the faces I see*

*Are all just mirrors, I'm looking at me.*

*Relating with who and what you are*

*From myself I know I cannot go far.*

*Reminders of from where I came;*

*Grateful to know I'm not the same.*

*You keep me aware that I must change,*

*You help me realize I'm not really strange.*

*Your pain I've felt, your ways I've tried,*

*Your smiles I give, your tears I've cried.*

*I've carried the load of the cross you bear,*

*Your search for the truth I also share.*

*In finding you, I'm finding me;*

*A reflection in the mirror of the person I see.*

# Total Surrender

I came to the Fellowship of N.A., beaten; emotionally, spiritually and physically. I could not function or face life without the use of drugs. The people in N.A. were unlike the people in the streets. I tried to "fit in" with my drug associates while escaping from them through some twenty years of addiction. N.A. showed me love, care and understanding which I did not know how to accept. Members told me to look at the first step. During my addiction, I substituted different drugs, confirming that I wasn't an addict. When I could not get the drug I wanted, I would switch to another.

The First Step of N.A. told me I was powerless over my addiction, I automatically substituted; "I am powerless over drugs".

To fit in, I said I was cross-addicted, dual-addicted, poly-addicted, a drug addict or a dope fiend. After being clean for a few months and looking at the first step, I realized I was caught up in chemical denial.

I still had all my old hang-ups and thoughts. I had to totally surrender to the fact that I was powerless over my addiction and not just over the chemicals. Only then could I start on the road to recovery with the help of N.A.

Thank you N.A. for showing me what addiction really is and for saving my life. Living clean helps

me to work on my addictive personality. Now I can face life on it's own terms with the help of the N.A. Program, other members, and my loving, understanding, forgiving God.

---

---

## RELAPSE

*Crying alone, in pain  
needing help, guidance, freedom  
rejecting it when we offer.*

*I fear you for  
asking for help  
then not listening*

*My God's gift of empathy  
is refused, denied for now...  
so you continue to suffer.*

*Please God;  
keep this addict safe...  
but not too safe.*

*We must feel pain to surrender  
but keep my friend alive  
to reach out again and listen.*

*My heart aches...*

*I can't recover for you  
or I would have.*

*The pain of addiction engulfs you,  
surrounding you with hopelessness  
my friend, my newcomer.*

---

---



# Communique on Communication



The recovery I have today was made available to me because I communicated a desire to stop using and Narcotics Anonymous answered.

Many of us die because we simply don't cry out for help. Our groups die or become stagnant because of lack of communication between members, other groups, areas or regions. I feel our Fellowship world-wide can be brought even closer together through simple word of mouth. Communication is certainly a "building block" of Unity. Negative communication or none at all surely spells disunity.

I tend to be the only member in our local meetings with "substantial" time clean. It's easy to allow my disease to convince me to try to control ideas... I then sit in meetings sounding like a clucking, cackling old hen. I avoid this sick tendency when I see it in myself by simply sharing from my experience. My time has given me experience living clean and I respect this and share it. In this way, what I share can add to the warmth, love, empathy and disunity, enhancing the atmosphere of recovery in our meetings.

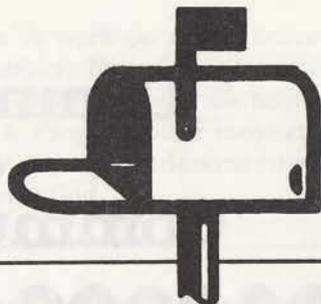
I use what works: I communicate in Narcotics Anonymous language and terminology. I feel this adds to our unity by encouraging oneness and sameness in our groups' message of recovery from addiction, the N.A. way. This may also contribute to our Fellowship's distinct, separate identity as a viable program of recovery. It works for me.

We often hurt each other through negative communication. I've seen lots of damage done to members through malicious gossip masquerading as concern. How many times have we assassinated the character of another member because they weren't working the program the way we thought they should?

The importance of positive communication finally came clear to me recently. I was driving down the road and a song played over the radio: "Communication Breakdown — I'm Going Insane"... Many times in my past, when someone tried to help me, I too would say; "I just want everyone to leave me alone".

Today, my KEY to the H.O.W. of this program is communication. Talk about honesty. Talk about openmindedness. Talk about willingness to try.

# Letters from Our Readers . . .



## FROM OVERSEAS:

Dear Fellow Members,

Just received the Jan. '83 issue of the 'N.A. Way' and have just finished a letter to the Editorial Committee . . . expressing our delight in the freshness and vitality of it's contents. I am sending [some money] . . . there are quite a few people interested [in subscribing].

N.A. is growing here in strength, numbers and ability to serve all the time.

Love in the Fellowship,

Dear Members,

I'm the secretary here overseas and am interested in subscribing to the 'N.A. Way' Magazine for 12 months. I hope this is possible and am enclosing [an amount]. I hope this amount [is sufficient].

Yours Sincerely,

Dear 'N.A. Way',

Keep up the good work!

The fellowship here would like to see a calendar of events [for N.A.] in your magazine.

With Love & Fellowship

Dear Readers and Subscribers,

The 'N.A. Way' is YOUR magazine. It is published by a directly responsible service committee for the whole N.A. Fellowship. You, the N.A. Fellowship created the 'N.A. Way' Magazine and directed our World Service Conference to form a committee - Directly Responsible to You - to administer it. The 'N.A. Way' Magazine is not an outside business or enterprise for profit, but a Service of and to Our Fellowship. The 'N.A. Way' will become what you want it to be.

Editorial Committee

Dear 'N.A. Way',

Thank you. A friend let me borrow his January issue and I really appreciate all the warm words contained therein. Best of luck to everyone connected with the 'N.A. Way'.

Sincerely,

Dear Fellowship Members,

Keep up the good work. The 'N.A. Way' has been for us, the most consistantly Inspirational publication by N.A. members. We wait with baited breath.

Love In Fellowship,

Dear 'N.A. Way',

Thanks so much for your hard work, dedication, diligence and 'stick-through-it-all'.

The 'N.A. Way' has become a very important part of many of our members' recovery here.

We had a meeting on denial the other night. We used the March edition of the 'N.A. Way' . . . talk about getting down to the nitty-gritty!

With Love,

Dear Reader,

My heart is filled to the point of inspiration-overload. One short year ago, a Fellowship-wide recovery magazine was only a vague dream in the minds of very few members. Today, the 'N.A. Way' is a viable reality in the hearts of many. You are to thank for this. I am grateful beyond words.

'N.A. Way' Editor

Please mail all articles, subscriptions, input, ideas questions and letters to . . .



The N.A. Way  
P.O. Box 93  
Follansbee, WV 26037

Dear Trusted Servants,

We have been asked to include a calendar of events list in the 'N.A. Way' Magazine. We need your help to provide the N.A. Fellowship with an accurate, useful source of information.

We will publish very simple listings of upcoming events planned by N.A. service committees in Regions, States and Areas . . . similar to the following examples . . .

MAY 27-29 — *REGIONAL CONVENTION* — Columbus, Ohio — Contact P.O. Box 451, Dublin, Ohio 43017

JULY 14 — *REGIONAL CONVENTION* — Ft. Lauderdale, Florida  
Contact F.R.C.N.A., P.O. Box 23573, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida 33307

JULY 15-17 — *CAMPOUT* — Reno, Nevada — Contact P.O. Box 3344, Sparks, Nevada 89431

SEPTEMBER 14 — *N.A. WORLD CONVENTION* — New York City —  
Contact WCNA-13, P.O. Box 217, Jackson Heights, New York 11372

Please send us any accurate information you have on such upcoming events in your Region or locality by RETURN MAIL TODAY.

We will simplify data to fit our format as above. Be sure to include a brief (1 or 2 word) description of what it is (Convention, Conference, Workshop, Retreat, Campout, etc.) the EXACT dates of when it will happen, and an anonymous address to contact for information. We will not print names or phone numbers.

## DEADLINE INFORMATION:

JUNE Issue will list events from July 1st thru September 31st.

JULY Issue will list events from August 1st through October 31st (and so on)  
*Listings must be received by the 15th OF THE MONTH PREVIOUS TO PUBLICATION.*

*Due to space limitations we feel obligated to limit this listing to larger events: of Regions, States and Major Areas. Please send announcements of Group Parties, etc. to your nearest local newsletter.*

*Thanks to your cooperation, we may continue to contribute to N.A. Unity . . .*

WSC Sub-Committee to  
"Administer to the Publishing of . . .  
The 'N.A. Way'.

P.S. In order to continue serving N.A., the 'N.A. Way' needs your help, please subscribe and/or become a Bulk Distributor/ Representative.

Thank You

## RELEASE FORM

ALL MATERIAL SUBMITTED MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A  
SIGNED, WITNESSED RELEASE PRIOR TO PUBLICATION.

I hereby give the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship, the N.A. Way Magazine, and their successors and assigns and those acting on their authority permission to copyright and/or publish any original articles, poems, or other written material that I personally submit to the N.A. Way Magazine, pertaining to my personal story of recovery from addiction and my personal experiences with or opinions about the N.A. Fellowship or program. I understand that additions may be made to my written material and that it may be edited. I further understand that every effort will be made to assure my anonymity. I possess full legal capacity to exercise this authorization and hereby release the N.A. Way Magazine, and the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous, its service boards and committees from any claim by myself, my successors and/or my assigns.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_