

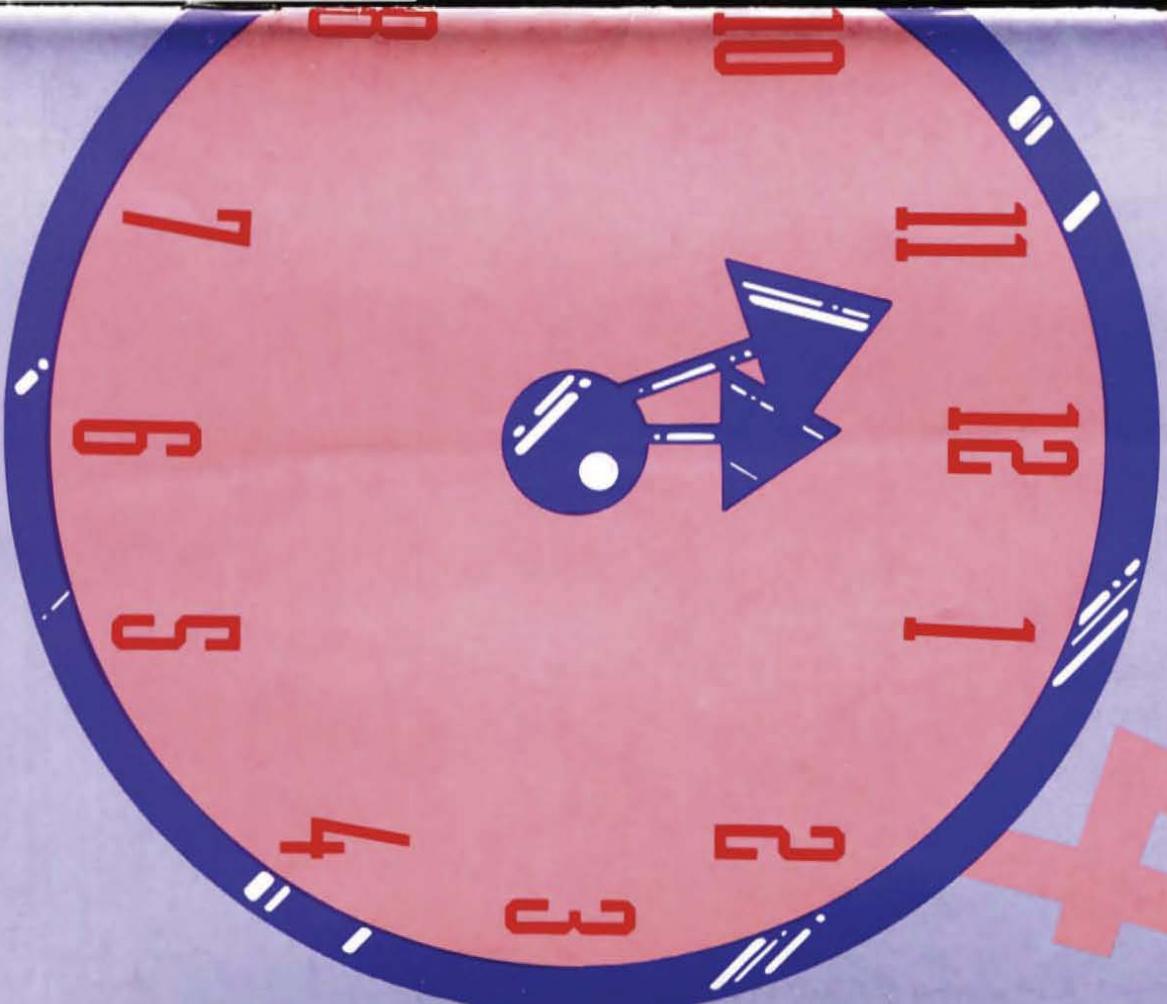
THE

NAWay[®]

M A G A Z I N E

January 1993

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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

volume eleven, number one

meeting in print

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PRACTICING PRINCIPLES

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA unity.

1. Am I gentle with those who rub me wrong, or am I abrasive?
 2. Do I make competitive NA remarks, comparing one group to another or getting into defensive power struggles with members of another group?
 3. Am I a peacemaker, or do I plunge into arguments?
 4. Am I as considerate of NA members as I want them to be of me?
 5. Do I share all of me, the bad and the good, accepting as well as giving the help of the fellowship?
 6. Do I respect other NA members' anonymity, or am I into gossip and taking others' inventories?

Tradition

1

Tradition

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.

1. Am I seeking praise or credit for my work in service positions? Do I feed my ego?
 2. Although I've been clean a few years, am I willing to serve my turn at NA chores, setting up and cleaning up?
 3. In discussions, do I sound off about matters on which I have no experience or knowledge?
 4. Am I critical, or do I trust my group officers, committees, newcomers, and oldtimers?
 5. Am I one-hundred percent trustworthy, even in secret, with NA Twelfth-Step jobs and other service positions?

Trinitio

3

4

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.

1. Are there certain types of addicts I do not want in my home group?
 2. Do I judge some NA members as losers who don't have a desire to stop using?
 3. Do I let religion (or lack of it), education, sexuality, age, or wealth interfere with my carrying the message?
 4. Do I treat all members of NA equally, whether they are doctors, lawyers, or living in poverty?
 5. Am I open-minded toward individuals who are ordered by the court to attend NA meetings?

Trinitarian

5

4

Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.

1. Do I cop out by saying, "I am not a group, so this tradition does not apply to me?"
 2. Am I willing to explain firmly to newcomers the limitations of NA help? Even if they get mad because I won't give them a loan?
 3. Have I imposed on any member of NA for a special favor just because I am a fellow addict?
 4. Am I willing to Twelfth-Step the next newcomer without regard for who they are or what is in it for me?
 5. Do I remember that oldtimers in NA can be addicts who still suffer? Do I try both to help them and learn from them?

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An NA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

1. Should my group list functions of other twelve-step fellowships on our calendar of events?
 2. Should my group plan activities with other clubs, groups, or organizations outside NA?
 3. Is it good for a group to lease a meeting building?
 4. Should an NA group make charitable contributions to a treatment facility or other organizations?



Every NA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

- T**radition 7
1. Honestly now, do I do all I can to help NA remain self-supporting? Could I put two dollars in the basket instead of one?
2. Should I put a little more in the basket for that newcomer who can't afford it yet?
3. Should NA have car washes or garage sales to raise funds for NA?
4. Is a group treasurer's report unimportant business? How does the treasurer feel about it?
5. Does my group keep substantial funds in its account, or do we forward the extra money to the area, region, or world?

Tradition 9

- NA, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.*
1. Do I try to run things in NA?
 2. Do I exercise patience and humility in every NA job I take?
 3. Am I aware of all those to whom I am responsible in any NA service position?
 4. Have I learned to step out of a service position gracefully and profit thereby when the time comes?
 5. What has rotation to do with anonymity? With humility?

Tradition 8

- Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.*
1. Do I sometimes try or expect to receive some reward, even if not money, for my service work?
 2. Do I sometimes try to sound like an expert on addiction? On recovery? On medicine? On sociology? On NA itself? On psychology? On spirituality or, heaven help me, humility?
 3. Do I make an effort to understand what WSO employees do? What workers in addiction agencies do? Can I distinguish clearly between them?
 4. In my own NA recovery, have I had any experiences which illustrate the wisdom of this tradition?

Tradition 11

Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the NA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

1. Do I ever give the impression that there really is an NA opinion on the war on drugs, doctors, psychiatrists, churches, treatment facilities, or government?
2. Can I honestly share my own NA experience without giving the impression that I am stating the NA opinion?
3. What would NA be without this tradition?
4. How can I manifest the spirit of this tradition in my personal life outside NA? Inside NA?

Tradition 12

Our public relations policy is based on a attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.

1. Do I sometimes promote NA so fanatically that I make it seem unattractive?
2. Am I careful about throwing NA names around even within the fellowship?
3. Am I ashamed of being an addict?
4. Am I always careful to keep the confidences shared with me as an NA member?
5. Is my NA recovery attractive enough that a practicing addict would want such a quality for themselves?

Tradition 13

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

1. Why is it a good idea to place the common welfare of all members of NA before individual welfare? What would happen to me if NA as a whole disappeared?
2. When I don't trust a current servant, do I wish I had the power to straighten them out?
3. Do I try to get my group to conform to my standards, not its own?
4. What is the real importance of "me" among the thousands of recovering addicts?
5. Do I stay away from certain meetings because of personality problems?
6. Do I do all I can to support NA financially? When is the last time I gave away a newsletter subscription to a newcomer?

*Anonymous
Courtesy Mid-America
Newsletter, Kansas*

Changing role models

I grew up not wanting for very much. To all outward appearances, mine was an ideal setting. It was a beautiful area with a forest and a lake. I always appreciated my surroundings. I loved to explore the woods and build forts. I swam and rode my bicycle a lot, too. My parents gave me everything they thought I needed.

My father had very set ideas about how things should be, and I have early recollections of bumping wills with this big man. His desire for family unity was often expressed with a "work order." He'd say, "Nobody's going anywhere today. We're all working around the house." I remember automatically rebelling against him.

Another thing I remember was that two B's and three A's on my report card were never good enough for him. When I'd show him my card he'd say, "Not bad, but what's the story with the B's?" I was never quite good enough for Dad. I needed things from my parents that I didn't get, but I had no idea what they were when I was growing up. It was hard for me to express my true emotions without feel-

ing I would be judged. I learned not to talk about what was really going on inside.

I found my escape through drugs when I was fourteen years old. Many of the kids at school were using, including my older sister. To me, drugs were no more harmful than cigarettes and a lot more fun. I always fantasized about being somewhere else, being someone else, or doing something else. When I graduated from high school, I left home to pursue a career in music instead of going to college as my parents expected me to. I left home with a burning desire to escape their influence and prove that I was worth something.

I moved to New York City, where I got a room conveniently across from my first job. I was finally on my own. At this job, I found people I looked up to as role models. I enjoyed my work, and tried very hard. One person in particular had a profound influence on me, serving as a sort of father figure for me. His influence was enhanced when he offered me a new drug. From the very first time I took it, I was like a fly on flypaper. Drugs distorted my reality. I was blind to the real deal, and loving every minute of it. I had arrived.

I always prided myself on the fact I was a "functional" addict. As long as I was making money at my chosen career, I was proving I was a success. Of course, most of the money was going to support my growing dependence on drugs, but I remained blind to this for twelve more years.

As my career progressed, my once positive attitude began to sour. I start-

ed to sabotage key opportunities and never understood why. My use of drugs mixed up my motives, and eventually I was fulfilling the prophesy of worthlessness I felt all through my childhood.

I made sure the drugs were always there. I never saw them as the problem; rather, I believed they were my salvation. They always gave me the effect I desired. I could rely on them, and as I did rely on them more and more, other aspects of my life came to seem insignificant. Drugs were slowly taking over my very soul. I became increasingly desperate, fearful, pessimistic, paranoid, and reclusive, yet nothing was going to stand between me and my drugs.

I felt like
I had found
my long-lost
family.

It all came to an end the day I got caught trying to get drugs illegally at a pharmacy. Combined with the intense fear of being taken away by the police was an exhilarating sense of relief. I had been crying out for help for a long time, and I had finally reached bottom. I was ready to do anything to get out of that hell.

I called Narcotics Anonymous. I was very scared at my first meeting, but I hung in there. I'd had enough suffering. At that meeting, I found people

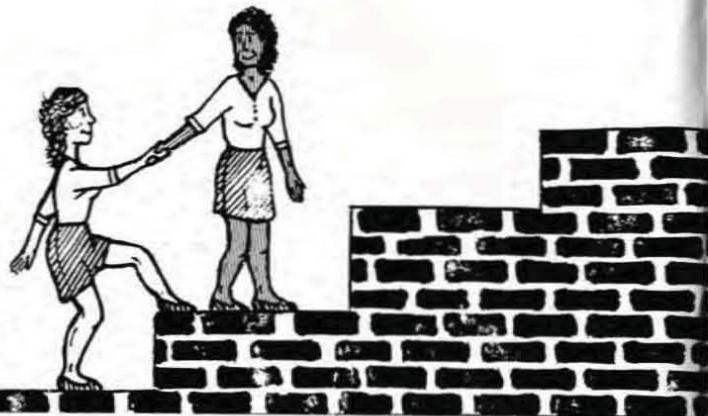
who had been clean for thirty days, sixty days, seven months! I felt like I had found my long-lost family. People reached out and welcomed me. They told me I was in the right place and that they would love me until I learned to love myself. I'd never experienced such warmth and acceptance anywhere.

As I kept coming to meetings and talking with other recovering addicts, I started to see that my story was not unique. I was not alone. There were a lot of people who had gone through a lot of the same things I had. I learned I had nothing to prove to anyone except myself. I learned that the only expectations I have to live up to are the ones I set for myself. I learned that everyone's not going to like me and I don't have to like them, but I can still have unconditional love for every person I meet. I learned to treat others as I would want them to treat me.

Today, my role models are people who practice honesty, goodwill, patience, caring, and the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of NA. By not using drugs, I know what I'm feeling. My opinions are valid. I can trust myself. Through NA, I have a chance to rebuild my life. I can accept change instead of resisting it. I can take all the good things my parents gave me and leave the rest. Most importantly, I'm learning how to believe in, trust in, and rely on a Power greater than myself, because I wholeheartedly believe that, left to my own devices, I would have been dead a long time ago. Today, living clean, I'm getting the most I can out of each precious day.

L.F., New York

My sponsor



My sponsor is a very wonderful, very loving, respectable person.

We are similar in many ways. We both believe in a loving and caring God. We are married to recovering addicts. We each have teen-age daughters. Knowing that our spiritual beliefs are similar helps us share triumphs and troubles in recovery.

The fact that we are both married is an asset when I have questions about my feelings toward my spouse. My sponsor helps me very much in this area, sharing her own experiences. We can spend time with our children together comfortably.

My sponsor shares honestly, is a good example, and helps others. Her honest statements are both positive and negative. She does not always tell me what I want to hear, but what I need to hear. While helping other recovering people with their problems, she teaches me how to be a friend and assist others. When she lends a hand to someone in trouble, she teaches me the values of unconditional love for another human being.

She is always willing to lend a shoulder to cry on or an ear to listen. I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that, no matter what time of day or night, she will be there for me if I need her. She shows her love for the program by getting involved in service work. She teaches me that being a part of the solution keeps me from being a part of the problem.

She has taught me how to respect others, and she has earned my respect as well. "What is her name?" you ask. She has many names. They are all anonymous.

Anonymous, Illinois

Awakening



When I started working my steps, I started my new life. I started with Step One, where I admitted I was powerless over my addiction and my life was so unmanageable. Believe me, I had no problem accepting this step; it was staring me in the face every time I looked into the mirror. As I began working this step, I received hope and courage and realized I didn't have to live the life I had been living for so long. When I surrendered to this step, I became honest with myself. I got out of myself and became willing to do whatever I had to do to stay clean.

Then I took a few steps in the right direction to Step Two, where I came to believe that I had a Power greater than myself to restore me to sanity. This step wasn't hard for me to accept, either. I had always believed in God, so it was easy for me to have faith in my Higher Power, whom I choose to call God. This step also gave me hope and the willingness to continue. All I had to do was seek a new me and become a caring person. As each day went by, it became easier and easier.

When I felt comfortable to go on, I went to Step Three. This was when I made a decision to turn my will and life over to the care of God, as I understood Him. When working this step, I did a lot of thinking about what I really understood of God. I knew God to be loving and caring, things I needed in my life then and still need now. When my will had been my own, I had always made the wrong decisions. Making the decision to turn my will and life over to the care of my God, my Higher Power, has been the best one I have ever made. Today, I am on the road to a new life.

By practicing these steps in my everyday life, I have learned to be open-minded about other peoples' feelings and thoughts. I am always seeking the "new me," and these steps have given me the courage to do that. I have also learned many things, like honesty, humility, and hope. With these spiritual principles, I know my life and what I can do with it is limitless. For this, I give thanks to NA, my Higher Power, and my sponsor.

J.H., Massachusetts



Young enough Old enough

In June of 1991, I was returning to my home town after two weeks of vacation. I had been living with my father for the past year and this was my first visit home. As soon as I got through the door my mom took me to see three recovering addicts. Before that day, I had never heard of Narcotics Anonymous or believed an addict could live clean. These three addicts shared their experience, strength, and hope with me. I was extremely strung out at the time, but I got the message. I told them that I would go to a meeting to check it out.

When I was younger, I had been the kid in the corner of the class who wouldn't talk. I had very low self-esteem and always felt inferior. Drugs gave me the courage to fit in. I could not find this in me, no matter how hard I tried. When I went to my first NA meeting, I was so scared I took my mother with me. When I got there,

however, I found I had nothing to fear. The people there were very nice and loving. This was what I had been searching for my whole life.

When people started sharing their stories with me, though, I started feeling like I didn't belong again. There was not a person in the room who was even close to my age. I began to think that I was inferior to other drug addicts. After all, I was only sixteen. It wasn't possible for me to have a drug problem at this age, right?

Despite all this, I still went to meetings. Even though I didn't believe I was really an addict, I stayed clean on willpower for twelve days. I didn't know why I was doing so, but I did it.

Then, a friend came to visit me, my using partner. Though I was determined not to use, I got high anyway and totally demoralized myself. These events showed me that I was an addict, even at sixteen.

With the help of my sponsor, I gradually accepted this. Suddenly, I didn't feel inferior anymore. I had gone through my own personal hell, and I had the same right to be there as anybody else did. In a sense, I had earned my chair.

For the next six months, I stayed clean on fear. I was scared I was going to die. I was very thin and weak. Since then, I have stayed clean because I have found something that I really love and I'm not willing to give it up. Today, in the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous, I am treated as an equal. In the last four or five months, many young addicts have come into NA in our area. They are all staying clean and finding recovery.

What inspired me to write this was an article in a magazine that I read. The author is a so-called "expert." She said that Twelve Step programs don't work, that they are just a trend that is attracting people who are scarcely more than potential addicts. Her article made me very upset. Young people can be full-blown addicts; recovery is not just a trendy decision being made by all my using "friends." Through the Twelve Steps, together, we are saving our lives.

Today, I have a little over a year clean. In the past year, I have learned many lessons. The most important one is this: I am old enough to be an addict, and I am young enough to recover.

B., California

Subject to revision

The world is always changing, and we need to change with it. As time passes, our knowledge increases, our experience broadens, and we gain more understanding. Everything is subject to revision—our perceptions, our opinions, our self-image, our images of others, our desires, our relationships, our friendships, our goals, and even our past. We may learn something about our past that changes the way we feel about our present state, which in turn affects our future. It soothes me to know in my heart that things don't have to stay the same. In fact, it is my saving grace. It encourages me to try to improve myself. It keeps my mind open to other possibilities. It's a constant check on my humility. It helps me to remain teachable. I'm comforted by the fact that everything is subject to revision.

L.F., New York

Clean and crazy

I've tried many times to write to you but have never succeeded. I hope I can do it this time. It helped me a lot to read your articles about people with time who'd left NA, suffering when the newness of being clean had worn off and reality set in. I've been there. It's miserable!

I've seen this happen to people who hit certain markers of time—five years, seven years, ten years, etc. When I hit five years, I lost my mind. I had watched other people approach their fifth anniversary and either go crazy with substitute addictions or lose the common sense they had gained in their time clean. I kept this in mind, hoping that if I could just hang on and work my program hard, I'd stay clean and grow through the experience.

Nothing—and, I repeat, nothing—prepared me for the measure of excruciating pain that followed my fifth anniversary. I had this creepy feeling of waiting for the other shoe to drop. I couldn't shake it. I went to more meetings, prayed, meditated, got into service, wrote, even sought outside help, yet the feeling got more intense.

A week after my anniversary, I be-

came very depressed. I fell into this deep, dark well of suicidal despair. I thought I was going to die. My views of myself and the world drastically changed. I was in shock. Reality was here and I was pissed. It took me four months to come out of that depression.

How did I make it through? By not giving up on God or anything else in my life that worked. What worked for me was God, NA meetings, my sponsor, people with time, counseling, prayer, meditation, love, and willingness. What didn't work, and what I had to try to get rid of, was fantasy, people who used me, character defects. What doesn't work still finds its way into my everyday life. Today, my life works more often than it doesn't. It takes effort, but that's why they call it "work."

How did I make it through? By not giving up . . .

When the depression lifted, I had weeks of serenity like I had never known. And today, I feel closer to my Higher Power and other people. I feel like a genuine member of the human race. It's great!

I celebrated six years on August 15th—and, so far, so good. I love NA, and I know that I would be dead without it. For anyone who's new, welcome. For anyone with time who's suffering, please stay! It's worth it! With love and gratitude,

P.R., Massachusetts

dow, I watched the sun set over the water. Then it came to me. What drew my sponsee to me in the first place was that we share some of the same humiliating and desperate character defects, defects that are usually not discussed at the group level. Before we met, he kept these defects to himself and his recovery suffered for it. He wasn't willing. But I shared my defects at a meeting, and he saw that I was one he could relate with.

The power of the program through identification brought us together, and it's been a great blessing for me. When I look at the bigger picture, I know my Higher Power orchestrated this, for some amazing circumstances and events had brought my sponsee and I to meet.

I then thought of my classmate again. I saw that because of my experiences, I can be of much more help to my sponsee than my classmate could be, even with her big education and all! I saw at last that God has a special job for each one of us where we'll be the most effective. Carrying the message of recovery is as great an honor as any degree from any school.

I was then honestly happy for my classmate's success. I wanted her to do well in pursuing her future. She's worked very hard and deserves the fruits of her labors. Those hollow feelings of worthlessness slipped away with the setting sun that night. For perhaps the first time, I really understood that my life had a real purpose.

G.D., California

A night of understanding

Recently, I've become interested in the lives of my old high school classmates. Some I haven't seen or heard about in over seven years. That's the case of this one very lonely gal with whom I probably exchanged no more than five sentences in school. I've come to find that I've been working with her uncle for the past three years, so I inquired of her. She's been supporting herself by teaching undergraduates at a local college and is about to go to an Ivy League school to get her doctorate in journalism.

Well, my ego has been on the rise lately, and I was definitely humbled hearing of my classmate's successes. Some of my old tapes kicked in, too. I thought that she's doing big, really impressive stuff, while I'm just spinning my wheels at the bottom of the hill. Old feelings of insignificance, low achievement, and worthlessness made their stand. Fortunately, I had enough program in me to see that for every person who goes to a prestigious school, many don't. I didn't have to pound myself into the ground like I used to. Still, for a while I pondered our differences in life.

Later on that night, I was working with a sponsee. Through his car win-

This moment



"Everything I have done has led me to this moment." I remember hearing that when I first came into the rooms of NA. All the lying, all the cheating and stealing, all the things that went along with active addiction led me here. That hopeless and helpless state of body and mind forced me to find a different way to live.

When I first got here, all I wanted to do was stop using drugs. Seeing other addicts staying clean gave me hope that I could do it, too, so I kept coming back. I met people just like me. They told me that my problem was a disease called addiction; I wasn't responsible for my addiction, they said, but I was responsible for my recovery. I learned how to use the tools of the program so I didn't have to use on any given day. Little did I know, but I had embarked on a weird and wonderful journey to find out who I was.

To the best of my ability, I did all the things I was supposed to do. I went to a lot of meetings. I started a relation-

ship with my Higher Power. I got involved in service work. I got sponsors, who I used only when I felt I needed to, and I worked the Twelve Steps.

I heard someone say once that if you want to grow in this program, get into service work or get involved in a relationship. Well, I did both and, in spite of myself, relationships have been where I've grown the most. You see, I didn't have friends during my active addiction, men or women. In recovery, I have found many.

"Don't get involved in a relationship during your first year clean," they say, and I know why today. But in the beginning, I still wanted some control of my life. I would turn the drugs over to my Higher Power, but I would retain control of some other things. He allowed me this, and I was off and running. The first couple of years, I was in and out of relationships. Then, for two years, I became involved with a lovely lady. It wasn't the most perfect situation, but I really thought we could make it work. Well, we couldn't.

At the beginning of this story, I said that everything I've done has led me to this moment. After almost four years clean, my HP figured it was time to get to know me. I never felt as much pain clean as I did when my love relationship failed. I had no idea what to do. Luckily, I had a wonderful sponsor, a gift from my HP, who held my hand, let me scream and cry, helped me feel the feelings, led me through the Twelve Steps, and encouraged me to find out who I was. For the first time in my life, I was living alone and doing for me, not other people.

It has been tough. My faith in you people and my HP has helped me get

where I am today. I still have days when I beat myself up over past actions. The impulse to do that, however, is growing weaker, and that thing between my ears is finally letting up a little bit. Today, I know I'm right where I'm supposed to be. I know that my HP has a plan for me as will care for me as long as I take action and leave the results up to him. I've had a glimpse of the person I can become, and I like that person.

Willingness without action is just fantasy. Today, I thank my HP for the willingness to make my fantasy a reality.

S.B., Wyoming

Balance

Each day when I wake up, my scales are "zeroed." It's up to me to decide how much weight each thought, desire, or pursuit will carry. When my priorities are in order, I feel balanced. How much time do I want to give this? How much thought should I spend on that? Is this really worth pursuing? Am I letting my impulses and immediate desires dictate my actions? In order to keep my priorities in order, I need discipline. To gain that discipline, I need to pray and meditate. In order to maintain a balance, I must also be aware of those around me and show some respect for them. This is because everyone's actions affect each other. I must also be aware of and caring for my environment. Balance is hard to achieve when I isolate myself from my surroundings. The most important factor in maintaining balance is love. When my underlying motives are based on love and caring for others, my environment, and, most of all, myself, balance is within my reach.

L.F., New York

From the editor

Editorial transition

Happy New Year! This is the first issue of the magazine to be produced without the able assistance of Andy M., former *NA Way* managing editor, in nearly three years. Andy departed Los Angeles in late November 1992 to return to his home in eastern North Carolina. We're grateful to have had Andy with us for a few years, and we wish him the best of luck as he settles back down in the Tarheel State.

Notice of an editorial opening on the WSO Publications Team staff was published in the November 1992 Newsline. We've begun reviewing the resumes we've received and hope to bring Andy's replacement on board before too many more months go by. In the meantime, the Publications Team will pull together to get *The NA Way* to press each month.

During the transition, magazine readers will continue to see the recovery stories, cartoons, opinion pieces, and news briefs they've come to expect from *The NA Way*. Additionally, we've begun a new department with this issue of the magazine that features a few of the best articles recently published in local NA newsletters around the fellowship.

Subscriber services streamlined

All new *NA Way* subscriptions and all inquiries regarding existing subscriptions are now being handled directly by our fulfillment service, an agency hired two years ago to maintain our subscription records. To inquire regarding a subscription, write or call:

NA Way Subscriber Services
PO Box 15665
North Hollywood, CA 91615-5665
Telephone (818) 760-8983

In the past, a subscriber calling to update a mailing address or straighten out a subscription problem had to contact WSO-Van Nuys. Now, subscribers who have problems or questions will be able to speak directly with our subscription service agency.

Survey

In this issue, readers will find a four-page survey designed to help the *NA Way* Editorial Board better serve your needs and interests. Please take a few minutes to fill it out and send it in. Additionally, if you have any comments about *The NA Way* that aren't covered in any of the survey questions, please feel free to drop us a line or give us a call. *The NA Way Magazine* is your magazine; please let us know how we can serve you better.

WSO Publications Team

Newsletters

From: The Free Spirit Newsletter
Calgary, Alberta

A concern

I am an addict in recovery, just like you. I don't care what your drug of choice was, but I am interested in what you want to do about your problem. I find that people will sometimes talk in meetings about drugs they have done and experiences they have been through. This makes me feel there is something I am missing. When I hear about these tales of conquest, I feel like going back out and trying the same things.

I have to remember that it is not how much, how little, with whom, where, or why we used, but what we want to do about our common problem of addiction. We must remember that no matter what drugs we used, they brought us the same problems and to the same place.

I'm not saying that we should shut the door on our past. I am simply stating that we all have the same problem with all drugs and mind-altering substances, and that we all seek a common purpose. That purpose is to achieve a meaningful and fulfilling life, clean of all drugs.

A newcomer to our fellowship

From: The NA Post
Manhattan, NY

What's a gift?

Some say that the first year is a gift. Is it a gift? Or is it hard work?

During my first year of recovery, I didn't know a lot of "how to's." For example, I didn't know how to stay clean, how to deal with money, how to be in relationships, how to deal with rejection, depression, or death. I didn't know how to work the steps or the NA program. I didn't know how to "turn it over." I didn't know how to "keep it simple." What I did know was that I was sick and tired of being sick and tired and that I needed help! All my life, I did things my way; my best thinking got me into the rooms. However, I didn't want to accept suggestions, so I had to learn the hard way through my own mistakes and failures.

I learned that I couldn't run and hide anymore. I had to deal with feelings I never knew I had. It is said, "the more we recover, the more we uncover." Every time I worked through one situation, another occurred. It was frustrating! But by talking about

the feelings with other recovering addicts, I learned how to deal with them a little better a day at a time. What didn't apply I let fly, but I had to listen to all the suggestions in order to determine what worked best for me.

I incorporated Steps One and Two into my life with little effort. They kind of worked themselves into my life. Step Three was difficult for me, at first, because I didn't understand what it was I was supposed to "turn over." I knew Step Three was an action step and that I had to make a decision because it wasn't going to be made for me. As I prayed to my Higher Power, the God of my understanding, things around me got better and Step Three became clearer. I prayed for strength and guidance. I began learning how to trust others with my feelings, which was very difficult for me to do.

For me, a gift is something that is given without having to work for it. I worked at my recovery. I'm an addict, and the easiest and most natural thing for me to do is to pick up and use drugs; not picking up is hard. Before coming to NA, I didn't know how to not pick up. By going to meetings and talking about whatever I was going through, the desire to use drugs eventually lifted. The miracle happened because I was willing to do the footwork.

I don't know what kind of feelings I'll be having after I'm clean for five years or whether I'll feel my first year was a gift or not. I do know that if I hadn't decided to turn over my will, work the steps, face my problems, feel my feelings, and reach out and ask for

help when I needed it, my only alternatives would have been jails, institutions, and death. Although new problems arise every day, I'm grateful for this God-given spiritual program. I know that if I didn't have the desire to stop using and wasn't open-minded to change, I wouldn't be able to enjoy life on life's terms.

I was told in early recovery that if I kept coming back things would get

better, and even if things didn't get better I'd still be better off! Just for today, I know that if I don't pick up, no matter what, my life will get better, my complaints will get better, and I will enjoy the gift of a new life, one day at a time. Whether a gift or hard work, it only works if you work it! So work it and live it, 'cause you're worth it.

Anonymous, New York

From: The Western Massachusetts Newsletter

On the Lord's Prayer

When I first came through the doors of Narcotics Anonymous and joined in the closing circle, the Lord's Prayer worked for me. Since I came through those doors, I have learned of steps, traditions, and other indispensable spiritual principles that I also found worked for me. However, while practicing one of those spiritual principles, open-mindedness, I became aware that the use of the Lord's Prayer may compromise our traditions. I encouraged my home group to discontinue use of the Lord's Prayer, but was handed a lot of "Well, it worked for me." I couldn't agree more—it worked for me, too. Unfortunately, the addict it didn't work for isn't here to say so.

Principles and traditions aside, it is my opinion (uh oh, there's that word) that this issue affects NA as a whole, not just my home group. A while back at a convention, a newcomer with about five months clean shared their love for the Lord's Prayer and "this Christian program." Yes, those were the addict's words. I was shocked and thought to myself that this problem is bigger than I thought it was. By using the Lord's Prayer, we are not carrying a message that says this is a spiritual program; we are carrying a message that this is a Christian program. This affects NA as a whole.

Today, I try not to present problems without solutions. NA has a truly beautiful prayer that delivers a message of hope, freedom, and recovery. It is called "Just For Today," and it works!

B.B.

Home Group

Jake's dream

LAST NIGHT I HAD AN ALMOST-USING DREAM, SERENA...

"ALMOST-USING DREAM?"
TELL ME ABOUT IT, JAKE.



I HAD THIS TREMENDOUS URGE
TO GET LOADED...



I HAD TO HAVE IT... I WANTED IT... I NEEDED IT... BUT SOMETHING STOOD IN THE WAY OF ME AND MY ULTIMATE DEMISE...

...200 SCREAMING SPONSEES -
WANTING TO READ ME THEIR 4TH STEPS!



World service news

Over the weekend of November 19-22, the World Service Board of Trustees hosted the last major world service meeting of 1992 in Van Nuys, California, USA. On the next couple of pages, we've included notes on some of the highlights we heard in reports delivered over the weekend, including many items that will appear in the 1993 *Conference Agenda Report* preparatory to this year's World Service Conference business meeting in April.

building Wyandotte Street location in Van Nuys, a Los Angeles neighborhood, to a single large building on Woodley Avenue, also in Van Nuys. At this writing, no decision has yet been made concerning such a possibility. The move is being considered to save money on a facilities consolidation and expansion. New facilities would be 40% larger but only 10% more expensive.

1993: Year of the Inventory?

A major topic of discussion in both Cincinnati and Van Nuys was a world services slow-down for conference year 1993-94 proposed by the Interim Committee. Such a slow-down, the Interim Committee suggested, could allow world service boards and committees the time to take inventory of themselves, set service goals for the future, and make realistic plans for achieving those goals. The idea, we are told, was met with some enthusiasm at the Cincinnati WSC workshop. At this writing, however, we do not know whether the slow-down proposal will actually appear in *CAR'93*.

It Works: How and Why approval form ready

WSC Literature Committee finished work on a new step-and-tradition book, *It Works: How and Why*, at the World Service Conference workshop held in Cincinnati, Ohio, USA, late in October. The approval form, which arrived at WSO in mid-December, costs \$8.80 plus shipping and handling and, for California purchasers, sales tax. The book will also appear in the 1993 *Conference Agenda Report* and will be voted upon at this year's WSC meeting.

WSO considers moving within LA

In the latter months of 1992, investigations were conducted into moving NA's World Service Office headquarters. WSO would move from its three-

WSC funds low

In a report given to the trustees, the conference treasurer announced that fellowship contributions to the WSC for the first six months of the current

conference year had come in at 13% under the amount received for the same period last year. As a result, the Interim Committee has canceled all third quarter world service gatherings except the meeting planned for January 8-10 to complete this year's *Conference Agenda Report*. An appeal for additional fellowship funds was mailed to RSRs in December along with the WSC treasurer's report.

Basic Text moratorium extension

At this April's WSC meeting, the conference literature committee will propose adding a five-year extension to the current moratorium on changes to NA's Basic Text. The committee chair says the moratorium will make it easier for fellowship translation committees to continue translating the text. The conference approved the original moratorium in 1988 in the course of correcting numerous printing errors in the text's fourth edition.

Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust revision complete

The Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust, committed last year to the trustees for revision, will be presented for approval at this April's WSC meeting. The trust, a legal document, was originally drawn up after a major internal fellowship dispute over the right of a few individual NA members to change NA literature as they saw fit and publish it themselves. The trust was presented to WSC'92 but was committed back to the World Service Board and an RSR working

group for another year, giving the fellowship time to review and input it. An internal use policy will be presented along with the trust. If approved, the policy will clarify the rights of NA groups, service boards, and committees to use NA logos and literature for NA purposes.

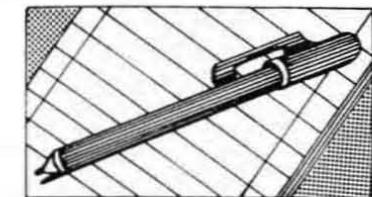
WSO board recommends world convention be held every 2 years

At its November 1992 meeting, the WSO Board of Directors recommended that, beginning in 1996, the World Convention Corporation plan to hold the World Convention of Narcotics Anonymous once every two years instead of annually. The recommendation was given in light of the steep administrative expenses associated with organizing an annual convention combined with the losses sustained by the convention corporation over the last few years. At this writing, the WCC board has not met and has had no chance to respond to the WSO board's proposal. Should the convention corporation accede to the WSO recommendation, the World Service Conference will have to be asked to approve the proposal before it can be considered final.

WCNA'93 speakers sought

The program committee for this year's world convention, being held September 2-5 in Chicago, is seeking main speakers with five years or more clean and workshop speakers with two years plus clean. Send tapes to Program Committee, WCNA-23, Box 25476, Chicago IL 60625 USA.

Viewpoint



Spirituality and the freedom of choice

I have belonged to Narcotics Anonymous for many years. I believe in the steps as written in the Basic Text of Narcotics Anonymous. But NA is not the answer to everything.

All of the time I have been in Narcotics Anonymous, there has been a strong voice saying "one disease, one program." I believe this phrase has been born out of a desire for newcomers to realize that alcohol is a drug, that no particular drug is the cause of their problems, and that we all suffer from a "dis-ease": We don't know how to live life on life's terms and have sought external ways of making ourselves feel better. Newcomers need to establish a sense of belonging, of being home, and begin to grow and understand the steps and traditions from one perspective.

There are appropriate times to venture out from the safety of NA and learn new things in new places. NA is a way of life, not a way out of life. Some challenges in my life can not be

met in NA. If I am to respect the traditions, I must respect the needs of my group. I must respect the hopefully ever-present newcomer who needs to hear about how I stopped using drugs and came to the point I'm at today where I can explore other options, knowing NA is my home.

NA is not a church. I thank NA for giving me the opportunity to freely explore spirituality. However, if I desire religion in my life, I can not expect NA to provide it. Discussion of religion would violate the traditions. To discuss and learn about a particular religion, I need to attend a church or other religious organization.

We needn't fear being swallowed up by fellowships that have come before us or will follow us. I have seen many addicts who chose to straddle the fence between fellowships eventually find NA as their home because the steps as written in our Basic Text made the most sense to them, not because some dogmatic individual kept hounding them until they saw the light of "one disease, one fellowship."

Let's encourage each other to listen to our Higher Power's will for us. Then we won't fear the choices of other people. We will be open and receptive to the differences that make us individuals as well as the similarities that make us addicts.

K.A.G., Georgia

Interests of the heart

Sometimes, being a recovering addict makes me feel like I'm someone special. By not getting high, one day at a time—something that gets easier to do as time goes on—I receive the benefit of having a Higher Power to guide me in my actions and to coordinate the coincidences of my life. In essence, all things become miracles, not happenstance. But there lies a paradoxical danger, an ego-trap, in this special feeling. This is an attitude of self-righteousness, the assumption that I'm privileged over others who do not enjoy the rewards of a recovery program. Indeed, I'm often inclined to discredit the opinions of those in recovery when they choose to separate themselves by identifying with special-interest causes while continuing to incorporate the Narcotics Anonymous trademark in their group names.

One particular controversy two or three years ago involved the announcement of an NA women's group meeting in a local schedule. At area service, it was argued on one side that this qualified as a special interest group, therefore violating the tradition of having no opinions on outside issues. A place in an official NA schedule could indicate NA's endorsement of exclusivity in membership. On the other hand, some felt it was necessary for recovering women in NA to have a place where female concerns could be discussed openly without the sometimes embarrassing presence of men. Similarly, in another

area, when a gay NA group declared that "all are welcome," the intent of exclusive membership was assumed by some addicts.

As I thought about this, I realized that I was saying one thing in my mind, but in my heart I was feeling another. My head said, "Can't these people leave well enough alone? Can't anybody just be grateful for recovery without setting themselves up as something special? Why do they have to separate themselves into smaller categories and alienate the rest of us?" In my heart, however, I felt something entirely different.

God bless those who take a stand for what they feel will help them in their recovery. If the sometimes confusing generalities of mainstream Narcotics Anonymous become obstacles in their programs, and if their Higher Power has provided them with a fellowship that allows them to focus on deeper issues that, if ignored or insufficiently resolved, could lead to relapse, then more (Higher) Power to them. And if the fellowship that not only saved my life but maintains it, as well, practices the same principles of tolerance of all addicts, regardless of selection of their relationships, the shade of their skin, or the shape of their genitalia, then I truly belong to a special breed of people.

Today, I can love myself in a way that was never before possible. Today, I am a special human being. But this does not give me the right to decide who else can be equally special. In my weakness, I allow the dope fiend in me to influence too many of my thoughts and actions, but in my strength I experience the miracle of tolerance and compassion. I have learned that the heart believes when the mind deceives.

K.G., Ohio

dicts in service are doing the work that it takes to support our program.

Let me tell you what my ASC does. First, we publish a list of meetings, a tremendously valuable tool for the newcomer. Next, we operate a helpline and beeper service. Third, we provide literature for institutionalized addicts. Fourth, we hold fellowship activities. Finally, we hold monthly committee meetings in which addicts can participate and, by so doing, grow in ways our self-centered, childish personalities would never allow in any other environment.

I believe that we get out of recovery whatever we are willing to work for. If I work the steps, I will grow; if I apply the traditions, I will grow. To gain an understanding of what an inventory will do for me, I must put pencil to paper. No amount of intellectualizing or conjecture will give me the experience from which I will grow. The way I get my "working knowledge of the traditions" is through service work, not debate, study, or discussion. Just like really "working" the steps isn't what my addict personality would choose to do, service "work" won't all feel good. There will be much to turn over, much to inventory, much to forgive, and much to make amends for.

While my ego is bruised to watch my fellowship shrink, I have faith in two things: First, we are where we are supposed to be. We will experience what we must to be able to surrender, both as individuals and as a fellowship. Second, there will always be a meeting for me to go to as long as I am willing to do the work that it takes.

B.C., New Mexico

Readers survey

Attempting to guess how you might respond to a survey regarding the magazine, it may be supposed many of you will resist the idea of tearing out the next few pages. If you are unwilling to do that because you wish to keep your *NA Way* collection intact, please consider simply writing down some thoughts in reaction to the questions. You need not write about all the topics mentioned for your input to be considered. Indeed, many people may have strong opinions only about issues that have affected them personally—but that is exactly what we'd like to know about.

Keep in mind that this is the journal of the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship and, as such, its bills-of-fare and treatment of submitted material are most appropriately indicated by you, the members.

The motivation to attempt to survey the readership, and perhaps the general fellowship, has been growing for some months. The matter has been broached several times by new review panel members. The panel would be happy to derive from this survey some rules of thumb by which to measure the manuscripts they consider.

During meetings of the relatively new "publications team" of the WSO, the idea of a survey has been discussed repeatedly. Finally, the members of the *NA Way* Editorial Board determined during their October meeting in Ohio that a survey feature should be published in the January 1993 issue of the magazine.

What do you want in your magazine? How conservatively or liberally should the traditions be interpreted when choosing and editing material? A kind of tension grips the review panel when such topics as semantics come up. The best we have been able to do on a question like "Do we omit drug-specific terminology from a writer's sharing?" has been to vote on each individual instance.

If an author states, "I believe my early use of pot contributed to my willingness to shoot heroin," should we change it? Excise it? Presented in nonspecific terms, that sentence would read something like, "I believe my early use of drugs contributed to my willingness to use drugs." We can zap the whole line, but where have we crossed another kind of "line" by prohibiting people from saying what they've meant to say?

And then there's "news." Publications that circulate in the greater society and are partly or wholly dedicated to the presentation of objective facts usually employ journalists who make use of things like the Freedom of Information Act to obtain—by subpoena, if need be—the minutes of official meetings. For us, no such avenue exists.

News of actions and developments in our boards and committees is most commonly reported by networks of personal contacts and, weeks or months later, minutes or reports are authored. Would dependable "news" that is objectively reported help or hurt our fellowship? If it would help, should it be in *The NA Way Magazine*, as our conference-approved guidelines currently mandate, or some other vehicle?

Current guidelines leave much room for judgment by the people now responsible for administering *NA Way* editorial policy. Those guidelines will likely be updated during the next few years, and now is the time to inform the policy-makers of your likes and dislikes.

The pages related to this effort are placed so that they can be removed completely and mailed in. Feel free to make copies or, as mentioned above, just write us a letter!

Survey questions

Both the editorial board and the review panel have expressed a desire to learn your tastes or concerns regarding the following questions. Responses will provide experience, strength, and hope for decisions in much the same way as NA groups are asked to inform their representatives.

1. Of the last four issues of *The NA Way*, how many have you read?
 0 out of 4
 1 out of 4
 2 out of 4
 3 out of 4
 4 out of 4
2. How many others see your issue of *The NA Way*?
 1
 2
 3
 4-5
 6-9
 10 or more
3. Which of the following best describes how you read the January *NA Way*?
 Cover to cover
 Skimmed
 Read articles of interest
 Did not read

4. The following is a list of items featured in the January issue of *The NA Way*. Please indicate the degree to which you read each item.

| MEETING IN PRINT | NOT | SKIMMED | READ | STUDIED |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Practicing the principles | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Changing role models | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| My sponsor | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Awakening | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Young enough | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Subject to revision | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Clean and crazy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A night of understanding | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| This moment | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Balance | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| FROM THE EDITOR | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| NEWSLETTERS | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| HOME GROUP | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| WORLD SERVICE NEWS | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| VIEWPOINT | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| COMIN' UP | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

5. What do you usually turn to first in *The NA Way*?
6. Which one item did you enjoy most in the January issue of *The NA Way*?
7. Which one item was the least useful to you?
8. Do you have any other comments about the January issue of *The NA Way*?
9. If *The NA Way* were to include the following features in its next issue, which one would you turn to first?
- How NA communities survived recent hurricanes
 - AIDS in various NA communities
 - Gender-specific language in our Twelve Steps
 - Children at meetings
 - Diversity of spiritual belief in NA
 - Recovering with an emotional or psychological disorder

10. How did you first learn about the fellowship magazine?

11. Do you recall a favorite or most moving story?

12. Have you submitted a story for publication? Was it published?

13. What motivated you to write and send it in?

14. What do you think of humor in *The NA Way*?

15. What should be the nature of news provided by the magazine?

16. Do you recall an objectionable story or article? What did you find objectionable?

17. Do you believe the magazine fairly reflects NA diversity?

18. How do you feel about fiction in *The NA Way*? How can we present it?

19. What has not been in the magazine that you'd like presented?

20. Does the magazine serve a purpose for you?

21. Do you think it is good for newcomers?

22. Should *The NA Way* attempt to appeal to non-NA members?

23. The magazine has never been fully self-supporting, though it came pretty close in 1989. Is it important that *The NA Way Magazine* be paid for by its subscribers?

24. If so, should we increase the price of the magazine to cover its costs, or should we downgrade the quality to reduce costs?

These are some of the questions that have been suggested by staff and editorial board members. Perhaps another good one is: Are we asking the right questions? What do you believe the readership needs to address to have the best possible regular written sharing provided? Let us hear from you. Thanks.

Comin' up

CALIFORNIA: Jan. 21-24, 1993; 1st Central California Regional Convention; Red Lion Inn, Santa Barbara; info (805) 487-1768 or (805) 486-1950; Convention, PO Box 1534, Ventura, CA 93002

2) Feb. 19-21, 1993; San Diego-Imperial Regional Learning Conference; Travel Lodge Hotel, 1960 Harbor Island Drive, San Diego, CA 92101; rsvn.s (619) 291-6700; info (619) 433-1285; SDIRLC, PO Box 16505, San Diego, CA 92176

FLORIDA: Jan. 22-24, 1993; 4th Annual Palm Coast Spiritual Retreat; Gold Coast Christian Camp, Palm Beach County, FL; info (407) 743-4579; Spiritual Retreat, 1605 US 1 Apt A-403, Jupiter, FL 33477

GEORGIA: Jan. 15-17, 1993; 5th Central Savannah River Area Anniversary Celebration; Lanemark Hotel, 640 Broad Street, Augusta, GA; rsvn.s (706) 722-5541; CSRANA, PO Box 15863, Augusta, GA 30919

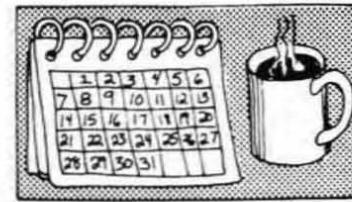
2) Jan. 16-17, 1993; 1st Annual WCNA Fundraiser NA Basketball Shoot Tournament; info (912) 788-5795;; PASC, PO Box 4362, Macon, GA 31208

ILLINOIS: Feb. 26-28, 1993; 5th Annual Chicagoland Convention; Hyatt Regency, 151 E Wacker Drive, Chicago, IL 60611; rsvn.s (312) 565-1234; info (708) 848-2211; Convention, PO Box 872, Oakpark, IL 60302

2) Mar. 5-7, 1993; 2nd Rock River Area Convention; RRAC-2, PO Box 1891, Rockford, IL 61103-0391

INDIA—BOMBAY: Jan. 29-31, 1993; 1st Bombay Area Convention; "Freedom in Unity"; Almeida Shacks, Madh Island, Bombay; info 261 9195 or 646 0463; Bombay ASC, PO BOX 16489, Mahim, Bombay INDIA, 400 016

KENTUCKY: Jan. 15-17, 1993; LACNA III; Holiday Inn South-Airport, 3317 Fern Valley Road, Louisville, KY 40213; rsvn.s (800) 465-4329; LAC-3, PO Box 2343, Louisville, KY 40201



MASSACHUSETTS: Jan. 8-10, 1993; 1st Boston Area Convention; Westin Hotel, Copley Place, Boston, MA; rsvn.s (800) 228-3000; info (617) 424-0958

2) Mar. 5-7, 1993; 5th New England Regional Convention; Tara Innis Hotel, Massachusetts; info (617) 647-1470 or (617) 782-0130; NERC-5, PO Box 1245, Waltham, MA 02254

NEW HAMPSHIRE: Feb. 6, 1993; No. New England Regional H&I/PI Learning Day; VFW Hall, Rte. 12, Fitzwilliam, NH; info (603) 472-2024 or (603) 584-9453; Granite State ASC, PO Box 4354, Manchester, NH 03108

NEW JERSEY: Jan. 23, 1993; Original NJ Area H&I Learning Day; Oaks Memorial Church, Summit, NJ

2) Jan. 29-31, 1993; 1st Greater Camden Area Convention; Hyatt Hotel, Rt. 70, Cherry Hill, NJ

OHIO: Jan. 1-3, 1993; 4th Central Ohio Area Convention; Radisson Hotel Columbus North, Columbus, OH; rsvn.s (800) 333-3333; info (614) 297-7472 or (614) 252-1700; COAC-4, PO Box 10323, Columbus, OH 43201-7323

PENNSYLVANIA: Feb. 5-7, 1993; 9th Mid-Atlantic Regional Learning Conference; Holiday Inn East, Harrisburg, PA; rsvn.s (717) 939-7841

SOUTH CAROLINA: Jan. 29-31, 1993; 13th Annual Area Convention; Holiday Inn, 4295 Augusta Road, Greenville, SC 29605

2) Feb. 19-21, 1993; 4th Annual Just For Today Convention; Hilton Resort at Palmetto Dunes, Hilton Head Island, SC; info (803) 791-9591; JFT-4, PO Box 23534, Columbia, SC 29224-3534

TEXAS: Feb. 26-28, 1993; 9th Annual Texarkana Area Convention; Best Western Northgate, I-30 & Stateline, Texarkana, TX; rsvn.s (903) 793-6565; info (903) 832-6257; TAC-9, Route 15 Box 113, Texarkana, TX 75501

VIRGINIA: Jan. 8-10, 1993; 11th Virginians Convention; Hyatt Richmond, Richmond, VA; rsvn.s (804) 285-1234; info (804) 756-8303; AVCNA-11, PO Box 15664, Richmond, VA 23227-5664

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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.

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*My gratitude speaks
when I care
and when I share with others
the NA way*

What is Narcotics Anonymous?

NA is a non-profit fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs had 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.