

C.A.N.A. NEWS

Capital Area N.A. Harrisburg, Pa. June/July 1989, Issue 111, Vol. 11

We are all one

By Mike P.

Narcotics Anonymous is a program of spiritual principles.

To me, this fact is all-inclusive. It means that the sum total of our principles is spiritually derived. I have come to believe over time that this spiritual reality transcends our entire message communicated in our literature.

In "What is the N.A. program?" we read that this is a fellowship in which membership is guaranteed to all - regardless of race, creed, color, age, religion or lack of religion. This statement is commonplace in law and in equal opportunity employment statements. However, our

statement regarding equal opportunity is a spiritual statement, not a matter of law or social recognition.

Recently, at our Area Service Committee meeting, two motions were presented regarding the possible splitting of our area into East and West shore areas. Much of the ensuing discussion revolved around the issue of racism. The discussion was emotional, as we all have feelings regarding this issue.

Many of us enter N.A. with racial baggage and we are asked to leave it at the door for this is considered an outside issue by virtue of our 10th tradition.

New Area?
Page 3

One Year
Clean
Page 5

Shortage
of
Women
in
N.A.?
Page 9

(Continued on Page 2)

Leave racial baggage at the doors of N.A.

(Continued from page 1)

On the surface, this expression of our traditions seems to be sufficient, yet it is not. The issue surfaces anyhow.

Why is this? I believe that this occurs because we attempt to deal with a spiri-

tual problem with a "physical" or "legal" response, if you will. We forget that we are dealing with spiritual principles which require spiritual solutions - that is, solutions based in the GOD of our understanding.

What is the spiritual basis of equality and racial harmony and unity in our fellowship? What does it mean to be a member of the N.A. family? What responsibility do I have to God and to my brothers and sisters in the fellowship? How is my personal recovery dependent on our unity as a fellowship - linked together under God's heaven? These are the questions that have gone through my mind over the last few days as I contemplated and prayed about the occurrences at our Area Service Committee meeting.

I was reminded of the TV commercial where the little girl confronts the little boy with "Are you the opposite sex, or am I?" We chuckle. But facing racial distrust with a desire to heal, we might well paraphrase her question

(Continued on Page 6)

10th ECCNA Let the Miracle Happen

June 23
to
June 25

University at Buffalo
Amherst Campus
Buffalo, New York

For information:
Dennis K. (716) 874-0202
Lori R. (716) 884-4749
Howard C. (716) 831-4712

Should the Area split?

By Barb K.

The possibility of splitting the area by a Susquehanna River boundary was introduced at the Capital Area Service Committee meeting in February. An intense and heated discussion followed these motions, in which many pros and cons were spiritually, or, as in my case, unspiritually stated.

Since that meeting, I have taken time to discuss and think about both sides of the issue. I feel that a split might be in the best interest of a few individuals, but I do not feel that the Area would benefit as a whole.

One argument in favor of the split was that it would create more service positions, hence more people could serve. This sounds like a good idea, unless you know that our Area already struggles with a lack of participation at the group and Area level. There is ample opportunity to serve now, and without a split.

Also, some members feel that because of the way the Area currently functions, the needs of certain people are not being met. My questions

(Continued on Page 4)

**Daytime
N.A. Meetings
are being held at
Point Freedom**

**Sixth & Maclay Sts.
Harrisburg**

**Mon.- Fri. at Noon
Saturday at 11 a.m.**

**Capital Area
Service
Committee
Meetings
2 p.m.
first
Sunday
of each month
Trinity Lutheran
18th & Hanover
Harrisburg**

Should the Capital Area Split?

(Continued from Page 3)

is, "Where are these people?" Group business meetings and Area Service are not invite only gigs! They are open to any member who wishes to express his or her opinion.

Other members argue that meetings are not as small and intimate as they once were. The miracle continues - so meetings are growing in attendance. Why does this warrant a split? Why don't the people who feel this way start some new meetings? We do not need to split the area to start new meetings, if that need exists.

N.A. is growing between Harrisburg and Hagerstown. Some members mention this while supporting the idea of a split. It is obvious that a new Area will form out of this growth. However, does this growth need to evolve from a split in the Harrisburg area?

A loving God has expressed herself through our group conscience and that conscience came back to the Area Service body as a loud and strong **NO** to a split at this time. As always "more will be revealed," and perhaps a desire for a split will surface in our group conscience at

some point in the future.

Narcotics Anonymous is growing as a fellowship, and we all know that with growth comes pain. I choose to believe that God, as I understand her, would not allow our fellowship to struggle without growth.

N.A. is alive and well in Harrisburg and I feel it can only get better - split or no split!

**The HOW Group
N. West & Louther
Carlisle
NEEDS SUPPORT
8:00 p.m..
Monday CD
Wednesday CD
Thursday OD**

**Views
expressed in
C.A.N.A. News
are those of
the author,
not
the fellowship
of N.A.**

Gratitude speaks: Looking back on year one

By Donna A.

I'm coming up on my one year anniversary and I find myself looking back over this past year quite a lot lately. I thank my higher power for getting me to my first N.A. meeting and I am grateful for the people that were in the rooms ahead of me. I hope that by sharing this with you,

I can give away some of what I have gotten.

I came into the program right off the streets without the benefit of a rehab. There was so much that I didn't understand. What did these people mean by "jammed up?" How do you work a program? What is a program? I did know that they were living a life without drugs though, and that is what I wanted, but could it be possible? I ask someone how. "Don't pick up and go to meetings." "Don't pick up and go to meetings." "Don't pick up and go to meetings." It is this simple.

For about the first nine months, this was all I could do. There were times when I just wanted to give up because I didn't think I would ever fit in and be a part of N.A., but there was something else I had heard in meetings that I did understand. That was that people who don't go to meetings relapse and I was too scared to do that.

I am glad that I didn't

New Meeting **11th Step Meeting**

8:00 P.M.

Friday

Mechanicsburg
Eleventh Step Group

Trindle Spring
Lutheran Church
15 State Road

Take Trindle Road to
State Road - Turn right

(Continued on Page 6)

Which is the opposite race:

Are you the opposite race or am I?

(Continued from Page 2)

and ask, "Are you the opposite race, or am I?" There is no scientific answer to this question. The question raises a deeper one: From whose view point are we looking at our fellow N.A. members? God, as I understand Him, saw everything he made and said it was very good.

What did God see? He sees his own perfect, spiritual ideas, all governed by Him and held by Him in unchanging harmony and love. God only loves! Love from God - in mind, spirit and principle - could not and does not cause or include elements of hate, conflict or injustice. And we, as human beings, the expression of God's love, should strive to reflect His all-inclusive love and compassion. The basis of spiritual harmony is this acceptance of the true nature of God and man.

Any belief that life, substance and intelligence belong to us and not to God is an illusion. Conflict between races and everything leading up to it are an unreal and unspiritual invention of the

human mind. This invention stems primarily from our ignorance of God. People of all races in our fellowship who have come to know the God of

(Continued on Page 7)

Meetings or Relapse?

(Continued from Page 5)

give up on N.A. because as my brain has begun to thaw, I have started to understand more and more of what I have been hearing in meetings.

Today, I am working at getting more involved with the fellowship of N.A. and I am starting to feel like a part of it. I guess what I am trying to say to the newcomer is, "Don't give up on N.A. before it has a chance to sink in. Give the N.A. way a chance." You will probably find out, if you keep coming back enough times, that you are where you belong.

N.A. is a spiritual fact:

We can afford to be loving

(Continued from Page 6)

their own understanding seem to agree on God's nature as loving and giving. They reject the motivation of greed, hatred, arrogance and the like. Those of us who can feel God's love can afford to be charitable, just, generous, unselfish and giving to all of our brothers and sisters. Our spirit and the nature of God become the substance of our identity.

In accepting these truths, we have to understand and acknowledge the all-inclusiveness of God's grace. A failure to do this can lead us to feeling less than or more than another addict and perpetuate racial strife. In our true being, we are all God's children - there are NO EXCEPTIONS - and the realization of this is the key to the solution of racial problems.

The reality and individuality of each of us is good and is God-made. Our spiritual principles, understood through our personal relationship with God, displaces the tendency to attribute any final significance to ethnic origin of any kind. God does

not look at our outward appearance, but rather He looks into our hearts. No one is excluded from God's love. The brotherhood of man and of us in N.A. is already an established spiritual fact. Our reluctance to recognize and accept this fact does not change the fact.

Racial discord and prejudice among members of our fellowship can find resolve only by yielding to a higher concept.

Racial discord and prejudice among members of our fellowship can find resolve only by yielding to a higher concept. New laws or enlightened diplomacy by themselves cannot free us from racial hatred, or from the self-destructive nature of the addict who has not found god's grace in ALL things. This is where a spiritual

(Continued on Page 8)

Spiritual initiative against racism and prejudice

(Continued from Page 7)

initiative against racism and prejudice, as with any character defect, is necessary. This new outlook can only be found through God. We can start by seeing ourselves as spiritually derived, each one of us. How can we justify or tolerate prejudice toward another, whose individuality God molded just as carefully and just as lovingly as our own individuality? Would not this also be self-rejecting as well?

Continuing in this vein, we realize that it's not the color of one's skin, nor any other trait that gives credence to prejudice. These are only conveniences for hatred or fear to attach themselves to. The source of prejudice is the unthinking acceptance of man as something other than the loving creation of God. The path to a spiritual uplifting in this regard is based in a

spiritually reorganized view of our fellow members as the offspring of God - our very brothers and sisters.

This practical, brotherly love, which sees beyond the physical being to one's spiritual origin demands constant attentiveness. It is an expression of love and requires stepping beyond our natural boundaries as acts of true love always require. It asks us to understand rather than be understood. It allows our individuality and diversity in culture and origin to strengthen us in unity, compassion and brotherhood.

It cannot be learned in a day. But the wonderful fact is that each of us can begin today. The pain may be great but the rewards will be even greater. We can be sure, too, that god is with us in this effort, assuring its success.

**Give C.A.N.A. News
articles, poems, letters-to-the-editor
to your GSR to take to
Area Service Committee meetings, or call:
Leon S. 731-9394 or 763-9104, Lori M. 236-2803,
Hugh B. 774-5215 or Barb K. 732-9626**

Shortage of women in N.A.?

By N.G., California

At four years clean, I am just beginning to deal with the anger that I feel toward men. While I take full responsibility for the part I might have played in becoming a victim of abuse, this self-acceptance in no way decreases the tremendous, often over-powering anger that I sometimes feel.

Lately, at many N.A. meetings I have been hearing men use language that is inappropriate in mixed-sex meetings, as well as listening to them get blatantly honest about the abusive acts that they committed while they were using. And this honest recital brings up overpowering feelings of rage in me. At times, I have sat through meetings feeling violated, even physically ill.

I don't believe that I am the exception. I would be willing to bet that the majority of women sitting in N.A. meetings were victims of incest, rape and physical abuse. If this is true, then it would hold that the rage that I feel when I hear men share about the violence they were

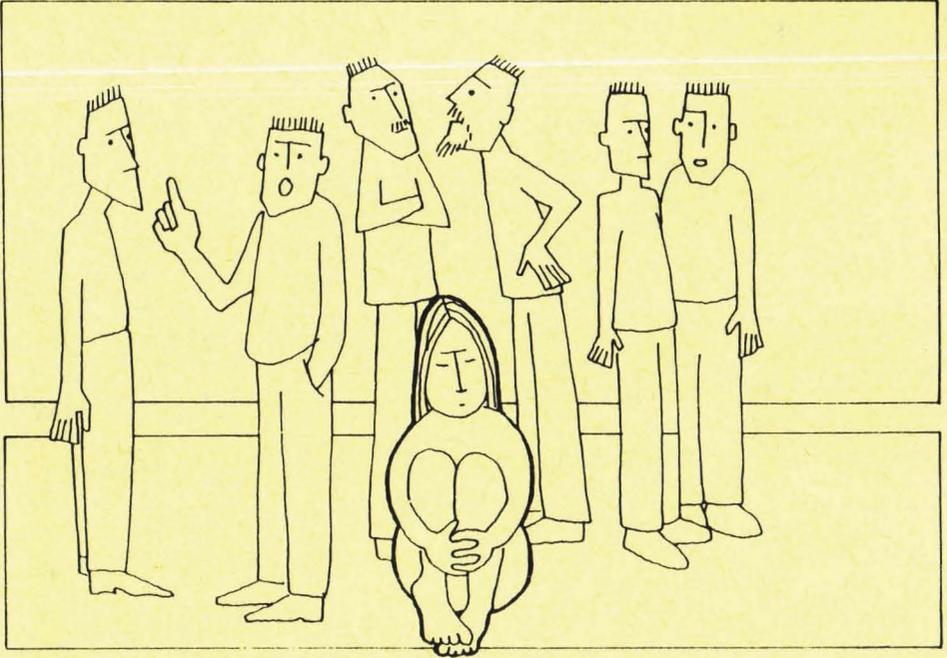
a part of is also coming up for the other women who sit beside me.

Perhaps one of the reasons there is a scarcity of women with much clean time in N.A. is that we begin to feel disrespected. After a few

**Perhaps one
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years of recovery, our heads are all just beginning to clear up, and the walls around our hearts just beginning to come down, making us especially vulnerable in areas like our shattered sexuality. When we go to meetings, we need to feel especially safe and nurtured. What is the point of

(Continued on Page 10)



(Continued from Page 9)

going to meetings that often make us feel more miserable and angry when we leave than when we walk in the door? It's no wonder many women simply quit coming to N.A.

Narcotics Anonymous is a program of recovery. I know that men, like women, have a need to remember what it was like. I can only hope that they do it in the appropriate place: in a men's meeting or with their sponsors. I crawled to N.A. a shell of a human

being. If it weren't for Narcotics Anonymous, I don't think I would be alive today. Therefore, I don't have the luxury of letting myself be kept away from meetings by a thoughtless few.

Our fifth tradition states, "Each group has but one primary purpose, to carry the message to the addict who still suffers." Our Basic Text, in explaining this tradition, states that its purpose "is to insure that this atmosphere of recovery is maintained. This can only be achieved by

(Continued on Page 11)

The speaker sets the tone

(Continued from Page 10)

keeping our groups recovery-oriented." At speaker-discussion meetings, the speaker sets the tone for the rest of

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the meeting. One who dwells on how it was, complete with graphic details and anatomical correctness, limits the

scope of his message. Ultimately, the responsibility lies on the groups' secretaries to pick speakers that carry the message of Narcotics Anonymous.

I believe that to become a whole, healed woman I must work through these feelings of rage I have towards men, and learn to trust again. The ability to be intimate with men, not sexually, but as one human being to another, will have to be relearned slowly. Please respect my journey through recovery.

*Reprinted with permission
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NEW*NEW*NEW*NEW

**Work the Steps or Die
Group**

7 p.m. Saturday

Ebenezer A.M.E. Church

Market & Lincoln Sts.

Middletown

H&I Meetings

(Note clean time requirements)

Sunday

C-90 State Hospital
Rehab
10:30 a.m. - noon
Requires 90 days
clean time
Contact:
Tony A. 540-1814

Monday

Common Ground Rehab
7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Requires 90 days
clean time
Contact:
Doug L. 763-0507

Cumberland County
Prison (Women)
6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Requires 90 days
clean time
Contact:
Barb K. 732-9626

Tuesday

Holy Spirit
Hospital Detox
7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Requires 90 days
clean time
Contact:
Jamie H. 737-1791

Tuesday (Continued)

Woodside Juvenile
Detention Center
7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Requires 90 days
clean time
Contact Ira H. 238-7897

Wednesday

Camp Hill State
Correction Institution
6:00 p.m. - 7:15 p.m.
Requires 90 days
clean time
Contact:
Tony A. 540-1814

Thursday

Cumberland County
Prison (Men)
7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Requires 90 days
clean time
Contact:
Jamie H. 737-1791

Saturday

Talbot Place Rehab
8:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
Requires 90 days
clean time
Contact:
Leon S. 731-9394
or Adam 834-3463