



THE NA UNITY

"Carrying the message of recovery, not the disease."

April 2009

Jails, Institutions and Death

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Newsletter Directory

Submit all articles, such as, recovery stories, poems, events, anniversaries, convention and much more.



Western Wayne Area

Mtg: Wed. Night Recovery

Loc: Church of Christ

24800 Ecorse

Taylor, MI

Time: 7:00 pm

Day: 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month.

I have to write about this particular subject because it is so true & definitely applies to me. I'm coming up on 11 Months clean & for these past 11 Months, I have been in & out of Jail owning up to the wreckage of my past, before all I did was run from it. I never complied with probation stipulations, never did what I was "ordered" to do. I ran for 2 years until I finally came to hitting rock bottom by catching a "Felony" charge on top of the 2 misdemeanor DUI charges that I had been running from. Everything came to the surface & I ended up in Jail, transferring from County to County to County clearing up warrants for my arrest.

All of this trouble is because of my addiction to Drugs. After getting 2 DUI's only a month apart from each other, I admitted myself into treatment, completed 23 days there & then went to an intensive outpatient program, I was ordered not to drink and managed to stay clean for 5 months until I was introduced to painkillers and of course I lost control, this ultimately lead to worse drugs that caused me to commit additional crimes to get my drugs, I was then on a complete downward spiral, desperate to get my fix everyday. It caught up with me & I was then arrested for the felony charge. That was April 8, 2008, I had no choice but to get clean, and I knew deep down that I wanted that choice & that jail was the best place for me. I would be unable to harm myself any longer...

Ever since that arrest & incarceration, I have been in complete compliance with my probation, I'm currently enrolled in a Drug Court program, and I'm attending Substance Abuse Therapy. On top of all that, I attend meetings regularly, Group meetings every week, I have a sponsor, I work the steps, and I also work the helpline, I'm simply doing the next right thing.

Today, I don't have to run from the law; I'm free of warrants & not afraid of the police anymore. I look back and think that all the trouble I was in was a blessing in disguise; I was heading down the path of death, now I feel saved. I'm amazed at what I have accomplished with a clean mind, I have new friends that "actually" care about me & believe in me but also hold me accountable for my actions. I owe Narcotics Anonymous a huge hug for showing me a new way of thinking & living and for helping me be that better person that I want to be. So thank you!

Elizabeth Z.

What Step Three Means to Me

This is merely my personal insight on the third step at this very moment in my recovery. From my experience, my understanding of the program will develop and grow as I continue to work it. As of right now, this is where my heart is concerning the third step, and I hope it will help somebody out there with the desire to stay clean, just for today.

Most of this is quoted from N.A. literature “It Works How and Why” and “The Basic Text.”

We made a decision

Okay, here I am, I’ve gained a few 24’s clean, worked with sponsors, and sat at some tables. I’ve worked through the first two steps, realized I have an incurable disease and that I cannot do this on my own. Now I am fully aware of my destructive disease, and the solution of the twelve steps and a higher power that can help me. Am I going to do this or not? I need to make a decision . . . the very decision implied here in the third step.

Now, It doesn’t say ‘we turned our will and our life over’, it says ‘we made a decision to turn our will and our lives over.’ The word ‘decision’ implies action. There is no ‘uniform way’ to put this decision into action but there are three things I found stated in “How it Works and Why” that can help me:

1. To continue our efforts to develop a personal relationship with a God of our understanding.
 2. To give up our old efforts at controlling everything around us. Instead, turn situations over to a higher power.
- To continue with recovery by working the remainder of the steps.

I see that it is a good idea to share with my sponsor about making this decision, and to bring it up at tables. After listening to others insight and experience, I will then make a decision of my own. It is a decision we make with our heart. “A decision made in feeling and desire than in deliberate reasoning.”

“Though the path from mind to heart seems a difficult one, formally working this step with our sponsor seems to help us make this decision a part of who we are.” . . . I love that quote.

To turn our will and our lives over

What is my will? “Self-will is composed of such characteristics as closed-mindedness, unwillingness, self-centeredness, and outright defiance.”

Okay, the way I look at it, Life on MY terms, in other words: insanity, has proven to lead me toward self obsessive behavior and destruction. “Fruitless Attempts to control everyone and everything around me.” “We were always on the lookout for ways we could force things to go as we wanted.”

My way of living doesn’t work. It sucks. My will is very selfish and destructive, I thought I needed to be high constantly to cope with daily living for crying out loud! I need to find another way to live . . .

To the care of god as we understood him

So if my way of living doesn’t work, even when I just take the drugs away, than what am I to do? Oh . . . another way of living . . . what way of living is that? Oh, DING, DING, DING, my higher powers, duh . . . So, what is God’s will? Remember those spiritual principles? You know, Honesty, open-mindedness, willingness, surrender, acceptance, blah, blah, yeah, that’s a good place to start. Of course, us as addicts have a bit of a hard time grasping the concepts of these spiritual principles (well obviously considering the way we like to try and live our lives, just being honest) so we need a little help in this department. Oh, that blue book, what’s it, that ‘roadmap to recovery’ . . . ? Yes, that’s why we read a blue book, cherish it, and share it with each other as we have for the past 25 or so years.

When it comes down to it, at the end of the day, we are people who have trouble actively being a part of every day life. A lot of the reasons differ slightly from person to person, but there is much more in common, and the beauty is this: we all have at our feet a solution that works for all of us. So basically what I am saying is that the basis of the program, LIVING the program, IS our higher powers will. Now our relationship with our own higher power is as personal and unique as the individual themselves, and it will grow as we continue to work our programs of recovery.

Seeking God's will is a lifelong process and an enticing journey that we are so fortunate to have the opportunity to take part in. All the areas in which we can NOW learn and grow as human beings are all opportunities for personal spiritual growth. The road to recovery doesn't end here either. After working step three, we have realized that we are addicts and we have an incurable disease, that we cannot overcome the alienation of our disease on our own and that there is something out there that can help us. And now, we've come to a point where we make the **decision** whether or not we're going to whole heartedly take action into putting the past behind us, and continuing forward, with our heads held up high in faith, on this new path, guided by our fellow recovering addicts, sponsor's, and our own unconditionally loving higher power, toward a new way of life.

Anonymous

The Pain of Letting Go

I sit here and keep feeling the pain. The pain that's way deep down. The pain that you tell me will make feel better if I deal with it. But why am I afraid? The little girl inside me is very afraid. Here it comes again, and this time I let a little bit out. And I cry and cry. I feel better so I know it does get better. So I guess I will deal with it as it comes. I found that writing about it also makes me feel better. I follow my sponsors' directions because I know she is helping me for the better. Write the steps - that's what you do. Things do get better.

Debbie S.

Service to Society

My name is Sheila and I am a grateful recovering addict! Doing service work in and out of NA has been a great tool in my recovery.

For me feeding the homeless gives me great satisfaction, and at the same time reminds me of where I was, and where I would be again if I don't stay clean. Seeing the faces of people who don't have a place to call home, receive food and clothes is something I'm grateful to be able to do today.

Giving a hug and a word of encouragement to those less fortunate, wondering if this will be there last meal is something that gives me great pride and self worth. Doing service work for society outside of the fellowship of NA, has humbled me, and strengthened my relationship with my HIGHER POWER.

In my active addiction, I took advantage of society! "It's time to give back" It broadens my recovery base and helps me with my ultimate goal, freedom from active addiction.

When I first came to the program I didn't fully understand the importance of doing service work as a way of helping me in my recovery. Today I fully understand and embrace it. Taking service positions such as secretary, treasurer, making coffee, opening and closing meetings, has also helped me grow in NA.

I would also like to thank those recovering addicts who donated time and items to a good cause.

Sheila F.

What is the difference between my will and God's will?

My will is based on what I want and what I think I need and my will leads me down a path of self-destruction.

My will wants short cuts, doesn't want to work for things, and prefers that others do the work for me and pay the consequences.

My will before I got clean didn't know about or wanted to know about spiritual principles.

Since I've been here, some of these principles have been introduced to my will, but my will still doesn't take me anywhere good unless my Higher Power's will guides it.

My Higher Power's will is good and always takes me exactly where I need to go even when I question it or don't understand why.

Hindsight is always 20/20.

My Higher Power's will is based on spiritual principles and is not destructive, but it only guides me when I let it and let go of my self-will.

My will alone will kill me, but also has helped bring me to Narcotics Anonymous, where

My higher power's will helps keep me here, no matter what.

Sarah S.

**NEW ACTIVITIES
PHONE INFO LINE
313 638-4990**

For more information please pickup a flyer at a NA meeting near you

CAMPOUTS

Camp Dearborn

May 29,30,31th

Kitchenette Cabins
sleeps 6 \$35 per night

For info call -

Pam C. 734 620-1089

Jerald R. 313 729-0255

Wolverine Campground

June 18,19,20th

August 13,14,15th

contact Stuart L for details
313 937-0095

CONVENTIONS

MRCNA XXV

July 2,3 4, 5th

Crowne Plaza Grand Rapids, MI

Info at

www.michigan-na.org/mrcna/

MDRCNA XI

November 26 - 29th

Marriott Hotel Detroit, Mi.

For info call

Alfreda R. 586 943-6014

Newsletter Staff

Chair: Stuart L.

Co-Chair: Robin G.

Secretary: Louie P.

Co-Secretary: Open

**Next meeting: 2nd and 4th
Wednesday, at 7pm, at the
Wed. Night Recovery
Meeting in Taylor.**

**Please join us with your
ideas and stories. All ad-
dicts welcome regardless
of clean time.**

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL WHO HAVE CELEBRATED CLEAN TIME!

March

Stasha p. 5yrs 3/14

Adrienne C.G. 1 yr 3/3

Marianne E. 6 yrs 2/14

John R. 15 yrs 3/04

Ed S. 12 yrs 3/25

Tony T. 2 yrs 3/7

Chris T. 2 yrs 3/30

"Ponytail" Mike 5 yrs 3/29

Rick W. 2 yrs 3/3

Anne Marie B. 18 mo 3/3

Tim K. 18 yrs 3/6

Mick H. 12 yrs 3/6

George B. 8 yrs 3/2

Keith R. 21 yrs 3/23

Johnny J. 1 yr 3/1

Spencer L. 1 yr. 3/17

VERY IMPORTANT

Our Area Service
Meeting will be on the
3rd Sunday in May



Area & Subcommittee Mtgs

Admin Meeting: 1:00 pm
 Area Meeting: 2:00 pm
 Loc & Date: 2nd Sunday
 Dorsey Community Center
 Westland, MI

Web servant: 6:15 pm
 Mtg Date: 1st Wednesday
 Mtg: For Sanity Sake
 Westland, MI

Policy: 7:00 pm
 Mtg Date: 3rd Sunday
 Loc: G.O.D.
 Livonia, MI

Public Relations Workgroup

PI, H&I, Helpline: 6:30 pm
 and Outreach
 Mtg Date: 3rd Fri. of each
 month
 Loc: Key to Recovery
 St. Mary's Hospital Livonia, MI

Activities: 6:30 pm
 Mtg Date: First Sunday
 Loc: G.O.D. meeting
 Unity Church, Redford

Public Information: 6:30 pm
 See Above

72 Musts in HOW & WHY?

- “However, we can learn to be honest, and we **must** begin to try.” STEP ONE
- “No matter how our disease displays itself, we **must** take its deadly nature into account.” STEP ONE
- “To get started on this journey, we **must** become willing to surrender to this program.” STEP ONE
- “Three of these that are indispensable are honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness.” This doesn’t mean we **must** be un-faithfully honest, open-minded, and willing. STEP TWO
- “we **must** remember that our understanding of a Power greater than ourselves is up to each individual.” STEP TWO
- This takes humility, for we **must** let go of our fears about how we may appear to others. STEP TWO
- As painful as it seems, we **must** change. STEP TWO
- We **must** now go on to Step Three to develop a relationship with the God of our understanding. STEP TWO
- We gather as much knowledge, insight, and experience as we can from these sources, and then we make our own decision. No one can do it for us; we **must** consciously decide to do this for ourselves. STEP THREE
- Our years of living a lie **must** end. If we sit down and become very quiet with ourselves, we will find it easier to get in touch with the truth. STEP FOUR
- Most of us don’t have much experience with the type of self-appraisal we are about to do, and we **must** have the guidance and support of our sponsor in order to understand what we’re doing. STEP FOUR we **must** begin to alter the self-defeating patterns that have prevailed in our lives. STEP FOUR
- We **must** overcome our fear and work the Fifth Step if we are to make any significant changes in the way we live. STEP FIVE
- Working this step with the support of our sponsor and a loving God is a way of putting into practice our decision to allow God to care for our will and our lives. That decision, like most decisions we make, **must** be followed with action. STEP FIVE

Right to Publish Disclaimer

This form must be filled out and submitted with any and all articles sent in for publication. Failure to do so may result in your article not being considered for publication.

I hereby give permission to the Western Wayne Area newsletter subcommittee to edit (if necessary) and publish my written article without recourse. The opinion expressed in this newsletter are written by individuals and are in no way a reflection of any member of the newsletter staff or NA as a whole. Articles are edited for clarity, punctuation, grammar, and in accordance with The Handbook for Narcotics Anonymous Newsletter.

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

- The first thing we **must** realize is that the Fifth Step is not a quick fix for a painful situation. If we work this step expecting our feelings to go away, we are expecting the steps to numb us the way drugs did. STEP FIVE
- Although there is no requirement that the listener **must** be our sponsor, most of us choose to share our inventory with him or her. STEP FIVE
- We **must** talk with other recovering addicts about our fears and feelings so we can hear the experience they have to share. STEP FIVE
- Although some of us have not understood the critical importance of the Sixth and Seventh Steps, they are essential actions that **must** be taken if we expect to make any significant and lasting changes in our lives. STEP SIX
- What **we must do**, rather than try to exert power and control over our defects, is step out of the way and allow a loving God to work in our lives. STEP SIX
- Despite our lack of familiarity with the realm of the spirit, we **must** remember that, in Steps One through Three, we were given the basic tools we need to negotiate the path of recovery. STEP SIX
- No matter how difficult our progress, we **must** persevere. STEP SIX
- Our fears of what we will be like without relying on the destructive behavior of our past **must** be overcome. STEP SIX
- We **must** be willing to take a chance that what lies beyond the Sixth Step is going to be better than our current stock of fears, resentments, and spiritual anguish. STEP SIX
- We've taken a giant step forward in the process of recovery, but it **must** be followed with another to be truly lasting. With the readiness we have at hand today, we go on to Step Seven. STEP SIX
- To work the Seventh Step, we **must** get out of the way so that God can do God's work. STEP SEVEN
- Because our view of what we can hope for may be limited, many of us can't even begin to imagine what our Higher Power has in store for us. If this is the case for us, we **must** rely on faith. STEP SEVEN
- We **must** avoid projections, either negative or positive, about actually making our amends. STEP EIGHT
- Most of us owe amends to at least one person who has also harmed us. Perhaps we haven't truly forgiven that person yet and find we are very reluctant to put her or his name on our list. However, we must. We are responsible for our actions. We **must** let go of resentments and focus on our part in the conflicts in our lives. STEP EIGHT
- Our idea that we have been a victim **must** go. STEP EIGHT
- Our recovery is at stake. If we want to continue with our recovery, we **must** make amends. STEP EIGHT
- Our commitment to recovery includes becoming ready to go as far as we **must**. STEP EIGHT
- Now we **must** do everything we can to repair the harm we've caused STEP NINE
- We **must** be willing to follow through, regardless of the potential outcome. STEP NINE

- We **must** be courageous when we work this step. STEP NINE
- But whether they are willing to accept us or not, we **must** go on with making our amends to them. STEP NINE
- We **must** let go of any expectations we have on how our amends will turn out and leave the results to the God of our understanding. It is very important that we do our absolute best to make amends. STEP NINE Even though we are sure to have amends to make to people who have also harmed us, we **must** set our hurt feelings aside STEP NINE
- In the meantime, we **must** remain willing tWe must somehow learn to live with such things. We live with indescribable remorse over such acts and wonder what we could possibly do to make amends. STEP NINE
- We **must** become more considerate, sensitive, and attentive to the needs of others. STEP NINE
- Though this may seem to be an abstract concept, we **must** make concrete amends by changing our behavior. STEP NINE
- But we must continue to grow, and that's exactly what the Tenth Step helps us do. STEP TEN
- Although forming a habit of working this step may be difficult at first, we **must** persist. STEP TEN
- While our sponsor will provide us with guidance, we **must** apply the principles of the program for ourselves and arrive at our own decision. STEP TEN
- In the end, we are the ones who **must** live with our conscience. STEP TEN
- In order to do so comfortably, we **must** decide what is, and what is not, morally acceptable in our lives. STEP TEN
- Of course, we **must** be just as careful when amending our current behavior as we were when we made amends in the Ninth Step. STEP TEN
- We **must** remember that the Tenth Step isn't a one-sided endeavor, an exercise in noting what we have done wrong. STEP TEN
- We **must** resist any urge to become obsessive with this step, ruthlessly searching out every flaw in our character. STEP TEN
- Although all of us need the love and attention of others, that doesn't mean we **must** depend on people to provide what we can only find within ourselves. STEP TEN
- We **must** build on our surrender by taking action, just as we have in the previous steps. STEP ELEVEN
- we **must** also increase the courage we've developed in the previous steps. STEP ELEVEN
- We may wonder if our sponsor is now going to inform us that we **must** pray or meditate in a particular way. STEP ELEVEN
- Though the temptation to pray for a particular result may be great, we **must** resist the urge to do so if we want to experience the rewards of the Eleventh Step. STEP ELEVEN

- We **must** make use of what we've learned in the previous eleven as we carry the message and practice the principles of recovery in all our affairs. STEP TWELVE
- Now we **must** ask ourselves, just what is "the message" we are trying to carry? Is it that we never have to use drugs again? Is it that, through recovery, we cease being likely candidates for jails, institutions, and an early death? Is it the hope that an addict, any addict, can recover from the disease of addiction? Well, it's all of this and more. STEP TWELVE
- Developing a personal style for carrying the message rests on a simple requirement: We **must** be ourselves. STEP TWELVE
- By striving to see beyond our individual ideas and the interests of our own group, we come to understand that the common welfare of all NA **must** come first. TRADITION ONE
- We can look to our individual conscience as well as the collective conscience for guidance in all we **must** do in fulfilling our responsibilities. TRADITION TWO
- We **must** exist in the world. It's not possible to be entirely separate, evading all contact with outside agencies TRADITION SIX
- We **must** exercise prudence in employing professional assistance for our services. TRADITION EIGHT
- Okay, so we may create service boards or committees. Now we **must** ask ourselves, why would we want to create such things? What are the needs these boards and committees would fulfill? To answer this question, let's look at how an NA group evolves, as we did when considering the Seventh Tradition. TRADITION NINE
- But what about speaking in a recovery gathering? Does the Tenth Tradition tell us that, as individual recovering addicts, we **must** not talk in NA meetings about the challenges we face? No, it does not. While a particular problem may be an outside issue, its effect on our recovery is not; everything affecting a recovering addict's life is material for sharing. If a problem we are having impacts our ability to stay clean and grow spiritually, it's not an outside issue. TRADITION TEN
- To do these things effectively, we **must** stay as free of the distractions of public controversy as possible. TRADITION TEN
- To fulfill Tradition Ten, our groups, service boards, and committees **must** exercise prudence in their public contacts. TRADITION TEN
- In all our contacts with society, we **must** take care not to express any opinions on issues outside the scope of our program. TRADITION TEN
- we **must** never do this—not with celebrity members, not with any member. If our fellowship used a celebrity member in a public announcement about NA and the celebrity later relapsed or otherwise suffered a loss of prestige, what good would that do our fellowship's credibility? The same could apply to any individual member put in the public spotlight on NA's behalf. TRADITION ELEVEN
- By the same token, we **must** remember that, wherever we go, we always represent NA to some degree. TRADITION ELEVEN
- To be of maximum service to the still-suffering addict, we **must** energetically seek to carry our message throughout our cities, towns, and villages. TRADITION ELEVEN
- But to attract the still-suffering addict to our program, we **must** take vigorous steps to make our program widely known TRADITION ELEVEN