



# THE NA UNITY

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

May/June 2009

## Addict vs Human

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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 am frankly tired of hearing people use the phrase "I'm so sick that..." or "I am still so sick that...". What about recovery? If we don't get better, if we don't change and recover, then what the hell are we doing here?

We do recover. We do get better. We do change and learn to incorporate spiritual principals in our daily lives. We do, only if we work the steps and learn to apply those principals "in all of our affairs".

To be sure there are plenty of people that come to the program and never get recovery. Some of them have acquired some time. As we read at the start of every meeting..."these are the principals that made our recovery possible". To me, that means that without step work, there is no recovery. There is fellowship, but the fellowship is not the same as recovery.

I was guilty of this for my first few years in the program. When I arrived at the rooms of NA I was a broken, isolated, degraded person that no one wanted anything to do with. The greatest service I could do others was to leave their pretense. I felt and knew this. Certainly no one wanted to hear anything I had to say. I saw pained expressions on the faces of my family when I showed up there.

So, when I got to the rooms, I began to realize that if I sounded good I could get approval from others. If I said the right things, chose the right combination of words, used the right emotional inflection in my voice, then others would approach me and thank me for sharing. This was a tremendous boost to my ego.

Additionally, I sought approval from others (female addicts) in the form of physical and emotional approval. This behavior had nothing to do with recovery, and everything to do with getting a quick fix. Addicts have a thing for a quick fix. I felt much better about myself if I had the approval of others in whatever way I could get it.

Things changed for me when that crap stopped working and/or grew old. I needed real recovery. I needed something lasting. I found that when I accidentally got a sponsor that worked and lived the steps. I chose him because I thought he was cool. Little did I know he would facilitate radical changes in my life.

Today I am not the same man I was. I thank God for that sponsor and the steps we worked together. I no longer have to justify my errant behavior. The behaviors that I exhibited back then were the shortcomings that could be removed. I didn't remove them myself, that was God's job.

My defects of character are with me for all time, just as the same character defects are a part of every human being on the planet. My defects of character are not gone. The shortcomings were removed. Yes, I still have some shortcomings, now I have new ones.

The defects that I learned about are true about me. That is why learning about them put me into such turmoil. BUT...they are not the whole truth about me. They are half of the truth about me. The whole truth is that I also have assets. Those assets are harder to see at first because I am so used to being down on myself. In other words it is a whole lot easier to see the defects than it is the assets. It is more comfortable. When I learn to see the whole truth about myself, then I begin to achieve humility.

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## *Addict vs Human*

To me humility is total acceptance of self, assets and defects. That does not mean that I simply accept my shortcomings "because I am an addict". It means that as an addict I have a program of recovery to deal with the shortcomings that flow from my defects.

There are plenty of non-recovering, or still-suffering addicts in the rooms. They do others harm on occasion. Hopefully, given enough time, they too will find a set of steps to work and learn to apply spiritual principals into their lives.

*Anonymous*

## TABLE MONITORS

When I first entered the NA fellowship in the early 90's, we used to pick table monitors. Table monitors were used to keep order at the tables, make sure there was no cross talk and maybe give a little experience, strength and hope after a member shares some difficulty they are facing or suffering still.

Being a new member and not knowing anything about living without the use of drugs, I appreciated some feedback, from a more experienced recovering addict. Who may have gone through what I am dealing with? Even a simple cliché as we say in our program, helped me get another day of freedom from active addiction. In the Detroit area's they still use table monitors. I was curious to why Western Wayne area doesn't utilize this option anymore? My name is Cheryl some people call me CC and I am an addict. If anyone can help me, please reach out to me so I can understand why.

In loving service, Cheryl C.

## *Finding the "Spirit" in Spirituality*

For some time, I have pondered writing an article for our NA Way. The subject that keeps gnawing at my thoughts is spirituality. Then I think about how spirituality is such a touchy subject in NA, one that we seem to tiptoe around a lot in meetings for fear we might offend someone or scare them away.

Enough tiptoeing! It is not my purpose to tell you about my Higher Power and suggest that you get one just like it. On the contrary, I want to share about the "spirit" in spirituality that, I think, we can approach with our feet planted firmly on the ground and face without discomfort.

Think about your spirit. Really, take a moment. What comes to mind? Is your Spirit responsible and reasonable? Care-free? Cautious? Adventurous? Calm? Fiery? Excitable?

What is your favorite color? Do you have one or several? Do you enjoy the kind of natural surroundings you would find at an NA campout, or would you rather go to huge conventions in high-rise hotels in big cities?

No, this is not a quiz to determine what type of person you are, so relax. I just want to share with others some things that work for me when I explore my spirit.

There are days when the only thing I know about myself is that I'm an addict - but that's just one part of my spirit, and it has been a long time since I accepted that part of myself.

There are many facets to my spirit. I enjoy warm summer days. I feel great when I accomplish something - and then my spirit always finds more things that need to be done.

My spirit soars when my daughter gives me a hug just for the heck of it or when my husband tells me he thinks I'm beautiful. I feel most spiritual after a good NA meeting where at least one person cried. Raw emotion is so real and very healthy.

I feel gratified when I share the message with a newcomer. It's so fulfilling to see an addict clean and working a program. My spirit gets a real kick out of competition. A good verbal sparring match with someone of opposing political views makes me giddy.

My home group is a part of my spirit. My family is a part of my spirit. I learn more about my spirit all the time. For instance, I'm trying this writing gig now. It's something I think I might be good at. It's something others have said I do well. It's something that HP has put in my heart to do.

My fears of rejection, failure, and imperfection kept me from taking a stab at it for a long time. After all, if it doesn't work out, I'll no longer be able to claim self-righteously that I would be a really great writer if only I had a really great word processor and a secretary.

I stayed stuck in this diseased thinking for so long that I eventually became miserable. For me, the quickest way to become miserable is to fight against the spirit that my HP has given me.

My HP provides me with the resources I need to let my spirit play. I have a pen, paper, and an old typewriter to process my words with. I have a Basic Text and plenty of fellow addicts to walk me through the fear. And of course I have my HP to whine to when I don't get what I want. HP listens to me and then gives me exactly what I need.

My spirit may not understand your Higher Power, but my spirit completely understands your spirituality and is grateful when you share it with me. Thanks to NA I discovered my spirit, and more is revealed to me daily.

NA Way *Tabitha I, Missouri*

### *Mercy*

My name is Orié. I am a brain injured addict with a metal plate, screws in my skull and more scars than I can count. I have lied, cheated, and stolen from the people I love most. I have punched holes in walls, had one night stands, and fallen down many flights of stairs.

Drugs that I have purchased have taken the lives of two, one who died in front of me. I didn't call 911; I packed up the rest of the drugs and ran. My worst nightmares have swallowed me whole and taken others down along the way. Only I am to blame and I take full responsibility.

Sometimes I feel as if the only thing that has kept me from death or dereliction is mercy. In the hopes that I may do something positive and learn from my past, I have been shown mercy.

It's hard to understand why I am still here while others are no longer. I figure some day it will all come together. Eventually, it might just make sense to me. For now, I accept that I have purpose and direction; my life is going somewhere. If I continue to live my life instead of escaping my life, then some day I will find out where I am going. However, my sponsor always says, "It's not the destination, it's enjoying the journey."

I have found things out about myself, which I never knew in active addiction. I am passionate about what I know will be my career; I feel as if I was put on this earth to work with children. I love learning and going to school; I will continue my education for as long as I can get away with it. I know that I am generous, kind, and compassionate and that people do like me, despite my belief in the past that everyone hated me. I know that I can find satisfaction in my life every day, no matter how hard that day might be to get through. I can now see that every hardship is a learning experience and every day clean is a success.

Orie S.

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

### CAMPOUTS

#### Camp Dearborn

Sept 25-27th

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/](http://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:** *Dave S.*

**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 addicts welcome regardless of clean time.**

### CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL WHO HAVE CELEBRATED CLEAN TIME!

#### March

Holly S. 3-10 18 months

#### April

Kathleen J. 4-19 1 year

Joy 4-14 2 years

Jen P. 4-13 1 year

Elizabeth Z. 4-9 1 year

Diana R. 4-12 23 years

Theresa L. 4-7 15 years

Beth H. 4-4 18 months

Kimberly S. 4-9 2 years

Sandy S. 4-9 2 years

Tim G. 4-28 5 years

Kate M. 4-30 1 year

Rick E. 4-28 6 years

Brandon V. 4-21 7 years

Tanya V-M. 4-1 6 years

Miriam G. 4-20 23 years

Mary F. 4-6 9 years

Beth D. 4-30 5 years

Lindsay ? 4-30 2 years

#### May

Jeff B. 5-6 6 years

Jim S. 5-1 4 years

Anne R. 5-6 1 year

Kevin F. 5-9 2 years



Area & Subcommittee  
Mtgs

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

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Policy: 7:00 pm  
Mtg Date: 3rd Wednesday  
Loc: Wed. Night Recovery  
Taylor, MI

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Public Relations Work-  
group

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

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Activities: 6:00 pm  
Mtg Date: First Sunday  
Loc: G.O.D. meeting  
Unity Church, Redford

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**Interested in  
the Outreach  
Recovery Play?**

**Contact:**  
**Co-Chair Spencer L.**  
**248-288-0265**

Recovery without God

It seems that I've been searching all of my life for something to believe in. Finally, in 1982, after fifteen years of nonstop drug abuse, I crawled into the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous. Though I was barely recognizable as a human being, I found in those rooms the hope that had eluded me for so long.

Upon receiving my first hug at my first NA meeting, I knew that I had come home. What I found especially appealing were the choices I had been given—the choice to not use, just for today, and the choice to have a Higher Power of my own understanding. For the most part, not using just for today proved to be much easier than finding a Higher Power.

Over the years in recovery, I tried many different gods: Jesus, Buddha, Saraswati, Vishnu, and countless others. But I found that trying to believe in an intangible and invisible being or force left me empty and longing for more.

What worked for me in early recovery, as well as today, is using the group as a power greater than myself. Actually it is the unconditional love that I get from the group and members of NA that I believe is a Higher Power—certainly greater than anything of which I'm capable alone.

Does this mean that I pray or meditate to the group? Of course not. Prayer is simply a petition, and meditation merely reflecting—it does not have to be directed to anything, anyone, or any deity in particular.

How can I possibly have any purpose or meaning in my life without a god? I believe my purpose in life is to develop into the best me that I can be.

Finally, with what do I maintain a conscious contact, and from where do I seek comfort, if not a god? Today I find comfort in knowing that I am living a healthy, good, clean life and that I am not harming others or myself. I can maintain a conscious contact by holding love close to my heart.

I seek to do the right thing for the right reason. I attempt to move my life forward in a good, orderly direction, and I do my best to incorporate the principles of our steps, traditions, and concepts into each day. I stay close to the program by going to meetings and sharing with my sponsor and sponsees. Today I accept my humanity. I know I'm not perfect, just a perfect human being.

My most significant spiritual awakening was when I realized that the power is in me. I cannot rely on a mythical being or force to do for me what I cannot do for myself, nor do I wish to. After a lifetime spent trying to be everything to everyone, I now know that it begins and ends with me. I have to do the footwork, I must make the effort, and I need to seek the solutions.

As it states in It Works: How and Why, today I have the ability to "live with dignity, love myself and others, laugh, and find great joy and beauty in my surroundings." I believe that life is an adventure waiting for me to discover all of its intricacies, not something to dread. I embrace the life that NA has given me today, and in spite of all the pain, loss, grief, and fear that I've experienced over the years, I relish every waking moment. I love life today.

I recently read something that, for me, says it all: "The meaning of life is to live a life of meaning." Today, with the help of NA, its principles, the friends I've made, and the people I've met along the way, I'm capable of living such a life.

NA Way 1999 *Anonymous*