



THE NA UNITY

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

August 2009



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When I was asked to write a story based on my experience, my instinctive response was: why? I wasn't born in a rough, gang-ridden neighborhood or brought up by drug-riddled heathens. Since birth, I was given more than enough chances to become a "productive member of society" and threw it all away for a life of drugs, homelessness, and constant despair. Why would anyone want to hear from a spoiled brat like that? Hopefully, the answer is because we're all the same. On a basic human level, I am you. We're all imperfect and the therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel. This is what I learned coming in to the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous and it has helped me immensely. However, it was a very long process to get there, and I definitely earned my seat at the tables.

I don't remember what that first trigger was, I wish I did. But whatever it was, around age 16 I became more comfortable using than squashing any of my problems. It started small, as it does for almost everyone, using a little on the weekends. Telling myself I was a "normal" high school student. Before long, I was the first one at the party, and the last one to pass out. Everyone else seemed to be cool with not getting more or maybe not getting any at all. I wasn't. It didn't take long before I was the only one trying to get one more. At that point, it started to seem a little less "normal."

By the time I graduated high school, I was an avid, every day user. Depending on how I felt that day, I'd use more. I was barely attending classes, I did zero work, and it's a miracle I graduated at all. Despite all the evidence to the contrary, I still thought I was on track with my life. I decided to enroll in college classes with scholarship money I had earned by scoring highly on a state-funded aptitude test. Needless to say, that was wasted money. I stopped going to all my classes and partied every single night. I gave up on college and worked a few dead end jobs. This took a big chunk out of my self esteem. So I began to settle on the thought that I just deserved no better than the life I was living because I chose it.

It was there that things got serious. I ran into an old friend from high school at a party and he seemed to be having much more fun than I was. He had a prescription drug that I remembered hearing about. I was at a point in my life that I was willing to try anything to turn my mind off. It was over. That's when the money really started hemorrhaging and my life's calling quickly fell apart. I began using every day and it became my one and only concern in my entire life.

I was exhausting my resources. After the college attempt, I had been involved in music for a few years and was working and playing out with different bands which only seemed to fuel the fire. But even with music, which I loved more than anything, I never could be dedicated enough to succeed. Drugs always took precedence over everything in my life. My parents had had enough. I'd lived with them my whole life until that point and I had bled them dry. For two years they took me to treatment centers, addiction doctors, outpatient therapy, and much more.

Western Wayne Area Newsletter

Submit all articles, such as, recovery stories, poems, events, anniversaries, convention and much more. You can email it to

wwnewsletter@metrodetroit-na.org

Or better yet come to our meeting

Mtg: Wed. Night Recovery

Loc: Church of Christ

24800 Ecorse

Taylor, MI

Time: 7:00 pm

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

They had tried everything they could to help me, and somehow always ended up enabling me. I had nothing and no one left to use.

So there I was, jobless, homeless, dreamless, and hopeless. I had a few friends that were only there because misery loves company and all my good friends had given up on trying to help me. I had no one to use anymore. Something needed to give. I was either going to have to drastically change my life, or die young.

I was like the walking dead. I cared about nothing and no one. I lived for that next fix. My needs and the needs of others were a non-issue to me. Finally, one Friday I ran out of couches to sleep on and called SEMCA out of desperation. I figured I might as well go to rehab so I'd at least have somewhere to sleep. I had no intentions of getting clean. In fact, during the drive to the treatment center, I was plotting ways to burn up the fifteen dollars in my pocket at the dope house.

But something happened to me in the process while at rehab. I can't say exactly what it was, but I decided I wasn't going to die. I had been to NA meetings before, but never with a true desire to stop using. There were great meetings in treatment that brought in outside people. Once I was willing to do the things it takes to stay clean, NA was able to save my life. I started meeting people and getting their numbers. I started "plugging in" to the program and staying clean one day at a time. I started taking suggestions, especially the ones that were hard to take. And in a very short period of time, good things started happening in my life. I got a place to live, a job, my family relationships slowly started improving and I developed genuine friendships with some amazing people from the fellowship.

NA exists because of people like you and me, and I literally owe it my life. I still have a very long way to go, but I'm happy to live out the process one day at a time. If you honestly want to change your life, NA is the only place to gain and keep recovery.

Nic

NA Poetry

Recovery is Obtainable by working the steps.
You're not gonna suck it up through your seat.

I know because I tried, and almost died,

I had to go back out and get beat;

Some people come back from going back out,

But more than a few end up dying,

This is the deal' "You're gonna get honest," because
"You're gonna die if you don't stop the lying."

Don't try to portray some phony facade

Pretending that you're doing the deal.

You can't transmit what you haven't got.

Until you've worked the steps, you've got Nothin' real.

Talk is cheap and takes no effort at all,

Running your mouth gets the easy part done,

Walk your talk, or go get beat some more,

If you make it back, you'll begin with step one.

Jeff W.

"FRIENDS"

Today I face the world clean, and things for what they are.

Looking back I stand amazed, at how I got this far.

So many times I've taken things, to change the way I feel.

In doing that I lost my way, saw things that were not real.

So many friends, who really weren't, and couldn't care less.

That only cared for me as long as my life stayed a mess.

There's always been a faithful few, and you know who you are.

That stayed with me through thick and thin, and never strayed too far.

I mistook their distance kept, and felt they did not care.

My using just pushed them away, it really was not fair.

I'm grateful for this selfless state, which I could never see.

When taking things to change myself, myself I couldn't be.

Now it's all so clear to me, to change the way I feel.

I simply have to see myself, and clean it's all so real.

Now I have some work to do, and with God's help I will.

And thank the friends, who loved so much, who stand beside me still.

Today I face the world clean, and things for what they are.

Without my friends, and love they give,

I'd never come this far...

"The Voice of Recovery" Newsletter, Sonoma County, Ca.

Johnny W.

The Path to Death

I'm in my head and upset, defiantly fed up and I feel like a reject, losing all respect thinking there's nothing to lose while my insides are black and blue. Guilt and shame builds hills and plains and I remain in pain until I start the steps in the game.

The voices in my head I start believing and agreeing; now I'm way too busy for meetings while my disease is proceeding. Someone says to me, recovery is discovery, and all I could do is laugh, I must of took the wrong path because now I'm being harassed, stuck in Alcatraz, but it happened so fast locked up in my head wondering how long it will last. Since I'm so disconnected I elected my disease president to answer all my questions, it's sort of like loading a Smith and Wesson pulling the trigger each time I want to answer a question.

Being in this state of mind I'm too scared to ask for help because I think I'm unique and one of a kind, so I stay locked in my mind, hoping for happiness I can find. I'm feeling sh*tty from self-pity, and I don't know where to turn, so I go to what is comfortable to me

as my life starts to burn. Now I'm going in reverse in a hearse about to be buried by dirt because I don't want hurt as death starts to flirt.

I never thought it would get this bad, I just thought I was going to have a little fun and wind up back in rehab with another chance, and now I'm dead while my blood sheds through my soul, and my disease won because it was "active" when it was my time to go.

Bergen Area Newsletter Sean W.

Interested in the Outreach Recovery Play?

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

Helpline Volunteers Needed

Give Back

What Was Given To You

Contact: Phil C. 313 740-4450

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

August 13,14,15th

contact Stuart L for details

313 937-0095

CONVENTION

MDRCNA XI

November 26 - 29th

Marriott Hotel Detroit, Mi.

For info call

Alfreda R. 586 943-6014

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL WHO HAVE CELEBRATED CLEAN TIME!

July

Toni Jo S. 7-26 3 years

Cheryll L. 7-10 2 years

Steve M. 7-5 11 years

Luther A. 7-6 22 years

Lloyd S. 7-8 4 years

Denise Z. 7-26 16 years

Jenny B. 7-14 1 year

August

Rob M. 8-3 3 years

Cathy S. 8-4 6 years

Jacky D. 8-2 18 mo.

Charles M. 8-4 4 years

Fred M. 8-6 3 years

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 ad-
dicts welcome regardless
of clean time.**



Area & Subcommittee Mtgs

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

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

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

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

Ad-hoc Literature Review
Committee
2nd and 4th Mondays
at 6:30p
Clean and Serene Meeting
Sheldon Rd Plymouth, Mi.

NA Helpline

I would like to take this opportunity to voice my experience and my opinion about the Narcotics Anonymous Helpline. There may be a slight misconception about the importance of the N.A. Helpline. I will get into greater depth on that personal judgment in just a minute. When I surrendered to this program on June 5th, 2008; I was very angry and frightened of my unknown future. I was going to meetings every day, and trying very hard to just fit in with the rest of the crowd. I didn't want to try to think about any twelve steps. I just wanted to stay clean. I was living in a three-quarter house/recovery center. There was no such thing as serenity, living in a two bedroom apartment with three other addicts. There was always chaos and the clashing of personalities, but that sure did beat jail. I had just finished serving a ninety day stint in Monroe County. I started interacting with some members of my home-group, and an addict suggested I train to work the N.A. Helpline; this was about day eighty of my new found recovery process. I already knew that I spent two or three hours a day gossiping about other people in the fellowship, why not take that energy and try to uplift the addict who still suffers? A strange metamorphosis was taking place, I was helping people. It wasn't all about me, all the time.

Around six months into my service, a young woman called the helpline. I was at home working the phones. I found out that this girl was fifteen years old and very scared and confused about the horrors of addiction. She was using h*!%i^ and a slew of other drugs and just wanted a way out. I shared my experience as an abuser of h*!%i^ for twenty-five years, and encouraged her about the freedoms found in N.A. I then asked her for her phone number and called a woman on our twelve-step call list, and had a woman call her. I later found out at a meeting that the young woman had made it to N.A. My spirit soared and it was then, that I finally realized the importance of the N.A. Helpline.

At the time of this submission, I have been elected by my peers as the Chairperson for the N.A. Helpline in the Western Wayne area. I just have a question to the readers of this publication. When do we *stop* exhibiting our gratitude? Two years clean? Seven Years? If we really believe that our primary purpose is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers, then why is there no support in all the different areas of our region? The Detroit area is really suffering, in the helpline area. I have a news flash, Detroit; your message is awesome, maybe you should pass it on to someone that has never heard of N.A. via the helpline. We are only as strong as our weakest link. I might as well add another cliché from the past; if you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything. The helpline has been an awesome tool for my personal self-esteem issues, because I am helping out society for the betterment of mankind. I am no longer part of the problem; I'm part of the solution. I am personally challenging all addicts to share some of that gratitude you're always spewing at the tables, to contact your area helpline chairperson to carry the message to the still suffering addict, by working on the Narcotics Anonymous Helpline.

Thank You for letting me vent. A *GRATEFUL* ADDICT, named Philip C.

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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: _____