



Crazy Monthly News

Clean & Crazy Group

Volume 6
December 2006

From the Editor

This month our theme is two-fold ~ Gratitude and Gifts of Recovery. I see them as going hand-in-hand I guess, because prior to coming into recovery I didn't have much gratitude (period). I was always looking for something more than what I had. To be content (for the most part) for what I do have today is a lot of growth (smile).

Max Lucado defines gratitude in a very simple way. "More aware of what you have than what you don't."

Another of my favorite quotes comes from Thomas Merton. "To be grateful is to recognize the love of God in everything He has given us—and He has given us everything. Every breath we draw is a gift of His love."

Wow! Can it be said any better?

A few years ago I was living

in North Carolina and I had made plans for one of my sons to move there to be with me. I had driven home to pick him up, as planned, one weekend. At the last minute he changed his mind.

So I came to a meeting, crying. I was crushed! My mind was completely engulfed by what I didn't have.

A gift was given to me that night in the form of a share. "Everything we have is on loan from God, and that includes our children," an addict stated.

I was struck by the profoundness in this statement. It didn't make me feel any better. In fact, it didn't make a whole lot of sense to me then, but today I know it to be true.

Nothing is permanent. To be stuck in a place of wanting that which we don't have

cheats us out of the time to enjoy that which we do.

That weekend I spent the entire time crying or deep in depression. I didn't connect with anyone, and that includes my children.

And, what if ... that had been it?

By the way, my children didn't spend Thanksgiving with me this year, but you know what,? It was okay—I enjoyed time with those who were there, and I try to enjoy each and every minute I do have with my children, my family, my friends... I *try* not to waste the loan of time today.

Nothing is permanent. God doesn't give us everything we want—but, I am assured, He sees to our needs, sometimes in ways that may not make sense at the time, :) and for that I am grateful.

Keep Coming Back

Wally B.

First, a little bit of an introduction. Some of you might have seen me in the rooms. I'm still fairly new. Some of you might know me. And some of you might have read something that I've written before.

I was sweating how to write this. I usually have a little bit of vulgarity in my writings, and I wasn't sure it would fly here until I remembered the fact that last month this fine piece of literary work featured a game by the name of "Bullshit Bingo" in which you yell "BULLSHIT!" at people, almost at random.

I think this might be able to be an interesting piece after all...So, gratitude huh?

That's a new topic for me.

Until the day before the day I first entered the rooms, I didn't really have anything to be grateful for. No girlfriend (still don't have one of those), very few friends (I could count them on a bad shop teacher's hand), no family, and nothing to live for.

That all changed!

Today, I'm grateful to be alive, I'm grateful for the friends I have (inside and outside the rooms), and I'm grateful for my NA family.

A very good friend of mine saved my life that day. And I'm not speaking figuratively here. But, *THAT* is a story for a speaker meeting, and that is a LONG way off.

I'm grateful for the second chance I received that day. I'm grateful for the family I now have.

At this point, I'd like to include something that I wrote about my first venture into the rooms.

Of changing time... lots of thoughts in my head, so few words to write them down with.

Last night I went somewhere that a very good friend recommend I go, somewhere I've needed to go for a long time. Somewhere I will continue to need to go.

I am thankful for my friend, and for her recommendation.

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Great Spirit Prayer

"Oh, Great Spirit, whose voice I hear in the wind,

Whose breath gives life to all the world.
Hear me; I need your strength and wisdom.

Let me walk in beauty, and make my eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset.

Make my hands respect the things you have made and my ears sharp to hear your voice

Make me wise so that I may understand the things you have taught my people.

Help me to remain calm and strong in the face of all that comes towards me.

Let me learn the lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock.

Help me seek pure thoughts and act with the intention of helping others.

Help me find compassion without empathy overwhelming me.

I seek strength, not to be greater than my brother, but to fight my greatest enemy

Myself.

Make me always ready to come to you with clean hands and straight eyes.

So when life fades, as the fading sunset, my spirit may come to you without shame.

(Continued on page 4)

**T'was the Night Before Rehab**

T'was the night before rehab and all through my brain, danced so many creatures like fear, hope and pain. To the top of the mountain, a place called "the farm." My training began-despite my alarm, My guard was up as I'd done this before, and I prayed it would leave when I entered the door. "Have a treatment experience" J.D. had said. It was then I realized I still had some dread. But my nerves settled down and my work than began. On the numerous tasks found in my treatment plan. One of my first tasks was relating my story, Which then quickly led to a self-inventory. Anger, resentment, selfishness and fear Were a few of my defects that appeared crystal clear? Manipulation, pride, impatience and lust, intolerance, dishonesty---Change was a MUST! I listed my assets to gain perspective, and realized once more, I was not all defective. Honesty, openness, the ability to care. Self-acceptance, commitment and hope-not despair. Patience and tolerance, the willingness to grow. An attitude of gratitude began now to show. Confronted with more insight, to now greater depths, I knew it was the right time to re-work The Steps. Powerless-unmanageable the nature of me, focused my thoughts back on step 2 and 3. Inventory, confession, readiness and prayer. Tackled my shortcomings and lessened their glare. Made amends to my family, to whom I'd done harm, and a daily spot check. It worked like a charm. Now I prayed for the knowledge of God's will for me, as I completely surrendered and then was set free.

T'was the night before discharge and all through my brain, no longer danced feelings like fear, dread and pain. I was leaving the mountain, a place called "the farm." And as I was told. It had done me no harm. Some changes occurred as the result of my stay. The first one that stands out was my action of play. More faith and more trust, a stronger program to live, more ability to take and not just to give. Courage, humility.... gifts from God above. Deeper serenity and a greater self love. My time now has come to say my final goodbye. Just for Today, I no longer live high!

~ ANONYMOUS

Get Involved

Our next Group Conscience is scheduled for Friday, December 8th.

- Chairperson—Maureen
- Secretary-Abbey
- Alt. Secretary-Lisa
- Treasurer-Teresa
- Alt. Treasurer-Jimmy
- GSR—Cheri
- Alternate GSR—Jimmy
- Activities-Robert
- Literature-Jimmy
- H&I - OPEN
- P.I. — OPEN
- P&P—Maureen
- Phone-list—Abbey
- Cell phone—Teresa

- Newsletter—Cheri
Newsletter Sub. Meeting Thursday,
December 14

- Keeper of the Tapes—
Kenny

Everything that occurs in the course of N.A. service must be motivated by the desire to more successfully carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers.

Member's Voice**How, as a newcomer, can I contribute to the group?**

I have asked many members of my NA family what is the best way for a newcomer to contribute to the group, and I also researched the basic text to find the answers to this question that has been in my mind. Some of the best suggestions are from other members with a few 24 hours. They are simple suggestions that also pertain to service. As a newcomer, I want to be accepted and feel like I belong. And some of the best ways that have been suggested to me are:

Listen. Be willing to listen to someone with a few more 24hrs than myself. This also means having an open mind about what is said, and being willing to follow suggestions. By listening I have a chance to learn from others and grow spiritually.

Share. Be willing to share my experiences, problems, strength and hope. This way another member may be helped, and see that someone else has problems that can be worked through. By sharing, I let the newcomer feel less isolated and afraid. I also help the "old timers" by reminding them where they have been and giving them a chance to help someone else. I feel like this is the best way for me to overcome anything that hits me,

because I know that no matter what my problem is, someone can help, and I do not have to go at it alone. This is a WE program.

Suit up and Show up. This is an easy one. Just by being there in a presentable manner I can contribute. I believe that just being in the NA rooms can help another member be at ease. I have made many new friends since I started coming to these rooms and I love to see new people and visitors. Just being there gives me that opportunity. A friendly face or a smile just might be the one thing that someone needs to see today.

Hang out. Before, during and after the meeting. I have heard this suggestion from a few people, and believe it to be a very important way to contribute. By coming early and staying late, I have the opportunity to get to know people and discuss things that were left out in the meeting either by time constraints or fear. Sometimes, the best meetings are the meetings after the meeting.

Service. Doing service work. Taking out the trash, making coffee, helping with the literature, passing out key tags, and many other small tasks that just need to be done, are all meth-

ods of service. My contributing to the newsletter is a small way to do service. I am looking forward to other opportunities to contribute to the newsletter. It has been suggested that I think about taking a position within group conscience as a way of doing more service work. That one scares me. I don't know if I am ready for that yet

Participation. Showing up for book study and other group functions. Going to retreats and attending another NA group's meeting. Showing up for group conscience meetings and P&P meetings are a way to get to know the key members of the group and how the group works as a whole. The more I find out about the NA way, the more I want it.

As you can see, there are many ways that a newcomer can contribute to the group, I would never have known there were so many if I had not had this question myself and the desire to find out. Recovery is a new journey in my life and I am looking forward to this new and exciting journey full of friendships and adventures. Thank you Clean and Crazy for being a part of my recovery.

~ Larry S.



AREA INQUIRER

The WANA ASC meeting for the month of September was held at the Deliverance group in Dothan on November 19

SUBCOMMITTEES:

ACTIVITIES

- ◆ Area Anniversary—See posted flyer.
- ◆ Subcommittee members are still needed.

P.I. & Phone line

- ◆ 6220 hits to the website.
- ◆ Please visit www.wanaasc.org
- ◆ Subcommittee members are still needed.

ASC:

OPEN FORUM:

- ◆ There was discussion on the need for people to step up and be of service.
- ◆ ASC has the following positions available: Treasurer, Alt. Treasurer, Alt. Secretary, Policy Chair & H&I chair.
- ◆ It was stated that Clean & Serene would be willing to host ASC meetings, but only at their facility.
- ◆ There was discussion on the area getting their own phone line.

SCHEDULE NEXT ASC:

Drop of Faith will host the next ASC on December 17.

CONTINUING BUSINESS:

- ◆ Motion to remove Julie A from H&I chair position—passed
- ◆ Motion to remove Arlene C. from Alt. Treasurer—passed

NEW BUSINESS:

- ◆ None at this time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- ◆ December 9—Dana W celebrates 1 year @ New Freedoms; Donna K speaks @ 3 PM
- ◆ December 12—Doug H celebrates 20 years @ the Backdoor group in Troy @ 7 PM.
- ◆ December 31—WANA 16th anniversary @ the Wesley foundation from 1 PM—10 PM.

Sixth Concept

Group conscience is the spiritual means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decisions.

When addicts whose individual conscience have been awakened in the course of working the steps come together to consider service-related questions, either in the NA group or in a service committee meeting, they are prepared to take part in the development of a group conscience. The exercise of group conscience is the act by which our members bring the spiritual awakening of our Twelve Steps directly to bear in resolving issues affecting NA. As such, it is a subject which must command our most intent consideration.

~ The Twelve Concepts for NA Service, pg. 13

Tradition Six

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.

Many other organizations wish to ride on the NA name. To allow them to do so would be an implied endorsement and a violation of this tradition. The next thing we ought never do is finance. This is more obvious. To finance means to supply funds or to help support financially...Further the tradition tells us that a related facility is any place involving NA members...We should make a special effort to let these people know that these facilities and NA are not the same... Most of these organizations are easy to identify, except for the other fellowships. Narcotics Anonymous is a separate and distinct fellowship in its own right. Our problem is addiction. The use of literature, speakers, and announcements from other fellowships in our meetings constitutes an implied endorsement of an outside enterprise.

~ Basic Text, pgs 66-67

What's Going On?

Basic Text Project Update

Are you reviewing???

The review-and-input draft of the Sixth Edition Basic Text was released at the beginning of September. Have you received yours yet? If you haven't signed up to review the draft, it's not too late. You can log on to our website and sign up:

<http://www.na.org/conference/bt>

Or you can contact us via post or email at:

NA World Services, Inc.
PO Box 9999
Van Nuys, CA 91409 USA
worldboard@na.org

What's new in the draft?

The draft includes a new preface, a revised collection of personal experience, and an introduction to that part of the book. The collection of experience is divided into four sections, each beginning with several pages of shorter reflections from our members, sort of like the sharing at a topic meeting as opposed to the speaker-meeting type of sharing in the rest of the section. The longer pieces are each summarized in a short abstract that will also be included in the table of contents. This should make it easier for people who are looking for particular kinds of experience to find them more quickly. For background on the project, see the solicitation flier and other material on our website: <http://www.na.org/conference/bt>.

As we have reported earlier, we also have some ideas about revisions to the titles we use in the book. We are proposing that we drop the designations "Book One" and "Book Two." The page before Chapter One would be titled "Our Program," and the page after Chapter Ten would be titled "Our Members Share." We hope you'll give us your input on ideas such as this, in addition to telling us what you think of the new material itself.

In short, the draft takes a brand new approach, in some ways, to the idea of collecting our members' experience. We hope to reach out not just to newcomers but also to members who have been coming to NA for some time. The collection is international and attempts to paint a picture of NA's diversity.

A work in progress

That said, we know there is more we could do to capture some of the diversity in our fellowship. In particular, there are some obvious geographic gaps in the material we are sending out. We are still working to collect experience, and we hope the approval draft (which will be voted on at the 2008 World Service Conference) will include some additional pieces. And because the collection functions together—it's not just a bunch of isolated, individual pieces, but a collection in the true sense of the word—there may be some pieces in the review draft that are not in the approval draft.

And it's not just the collection itself that is a work in progress. We are also still discussing questions such as what to call this part of the Basic Text ("Our Members Share"? "Our Stories"? or something else) and how to refer to the pages of shorter passages of sharing ("Reflections"? "Cameos"? "Vignettes"? or something else).





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I went somewhere where I thought that I wasn't going to be like those people.

Now I know if I'm lucky and work hard, I'll be proud to be like the people I met there.

If anyone wants to know, I might tell you. But, trust me, it was a good place for me to be, its something that was hard for me to talk about with my oldest of friends, so if I don't feel like opening up, then I hope you can understand. However, I can ease some fears.

1. *not a cult, in any form or meaning of the word*
2. *not a nerd thing*
3. *doesn't involve nekked dudes.*

Anyways, not a place I was expecting to end up.

And life isn't QUITE as bleak. Well, you know me, life is still pretty bleak, but hey, it can't rain all the time. Life still sucks, but maybe its not a sucking chest wound.

Harder to sleep, but oh well.

I am aware that using previously written material is cheating, but I don't want to just write about what I am grateful for, I'd also like to express that gratitude.

That (*all the italicized words*) is one of the few serious things that I have ever written, and it was because I was given a second chance at life.

I am just grateful for the NA program itself, for the help that you, my fellow members, have offered and given to me, and I am grateful for the chance I will be given to help others the way that I have been helped.

You have my gratitude.

Jimmy K, Founder Of Narcotics Anonymous, Speaks On The Twentieth Anniversary Of The Beginning Of Our Fellowship



*Transcribed from tape
Occasion: 20th Anniversary Dinner,
Location: Islander Restaurant - Los Angeles
Date: August 18, 1973
Introduction by Bob B.*

"The 20th Anniversary is, I think, a good occasion for me in terms of—I was not around for the 20 years because I was still playing crazy. But about 15 years ago, when I did come around I met some people that—something happened in the process. And it wasn't to happen for another three years; before I was to get clean at the insistence of the state. And then to find out that I could come out after a couple of years and to stay clean over a period of over ten years. "It wouldn't have been possible if there wasn't people like the people in this room that kind of insisted, kind of pushed, kind of bad rapped me, they kind of held me up. They gave me all the things that were necessary, he things that I needed. And at the same time, one person that I became very close to, at that time, stayed in close touch with me over the years—giving me some confidence in terms; that I could do it if I would only try. And we've been through many trials of error in my growing up. And at the same time, we've shared a lot of heart-aches and pleasures also. I'm going to let him tell you his own story in terms of what happened. "At this time, I've been going through papers—our offices and things have been in trunks of cars and back of garages—in cardboard boxes, in old filing cases, and what have you. And many of these things that I've kept over a period of years is an original set of By-Laws that were adopted in 1953. August the 17th, which was yesterday—today is like a year (20 years) and one day. This set of guides that were set down in order to determine, how to run, or to govern NA as a whole; some particular guides. There have been many, many additions and changes since then. But at this time I thought it would be appropriate that I put these here By-Laws in some kind of archives for safe

keeping. And who better is there to give this (to) , and put it in safe keeping, but the person who helped put it together, kind of shepherded it around, kept us all tied in some manner together. And I put them in a binder so that he can probably put them away with the rest of his treasures as a remembrance of, say, oh—that's where it started and this is how it is today. And I would like to, at this time, to introduce and present this here set of By-Laws as a token of safe keeping and a token of whatever. I can't—don't even know the words to express it—to Jimmy K., one of the founders of NA; and one of the people who has been a mainstay; and one that keeps it together—and has kept it together through many of the years that it has been around. So, this is the By-Laws, an original set, and I'm going to give these here to Jimmy.

"And at this time Jimmy probably can give a little more background and highlight as to where it came from, what happened, and what's happening right now. I'm gonna turn it over to Jimmy K."

Text of Jimmy's speech - Complete and unedited: -

"My name's Jimmy Kinnon, I'm an addict and an alcoholic. I've been on the verge of tears for about one hour here and that almost did it. But I'm not ashamed of tears anymore, providing they're the kind that are shed for something that's worthwhile. That just about wiped my brain clean. I can't even remember what I was going to say now. However, in our fellowship, at any time, our main purpose has to be always foremost in our lives: whether we're socializing with each other in our individual homes or whether we're at a gathering of this kind, particularly this kind. What I have to remember, personally, that I'm here, and possibly all of you are here because of people who'll never be here. "Most of you have noticed that there are a few pictures over there on that easel. These are some of the pictures of the beginnings. We started long before NA was a reality, even in name. We grew out of a need (we grew out of a need) and we found: Those of us who were members, had come into AA, and found we could recover. In AA we found out that many addicts were still going down the road of degradation and death. And we thought it was right that we should try to do something. But, you know, we're funny people, the more we try to do things together, the more we fight each other and the more we tear each other apart—tear down the very

thing we try to build. And that's been the history, up until a few short years ago, of Narcotics Anonymous. We tore down as fast as we built. That's the kind of people we are and we must recognize that to recover. All of us must know the nature of the illness, the nature of the addict, and the nature of recovery. All these things are necessary to grow and to live and to change. And we started from resentments; resentments made us grow. "Before NA there was HFD (Habit Forming Drug Groups). These were hidden, these were two or three people meeting in apartments, here and there. Nobody knew where they were; they demanded certain things, and were dominated by one or two persons. You know, you and I don't go for authority, we don't like authority. A few of the people I met down on skid row years ago from East LA formed another group known as Addicts Anonymous. They infringed on the AA name and they died very quickly because they too were dominated by one man. We had another group started in the valley then that also called itself HFD and was dominated by one man. "So we found out very early, and our experience has taught us. that we can have no bosses, no big shots in Narcotics Anonymous. For a while after we formed: A lot of things happened that I'm not going into tonight— but due to some things that happened and due to the nature of the addict, the nature of our illness, some people were put in a position where they became the leaders again, the "Great White Father." You know, we can't have a "Great White Father" or a "Big Momma", you know, it doesn't work in this organization. And NA died once more, and the friends of ours in AA helped to pick us up, and said, "Don't let it bother you." These were the real friends we had in the beginning; members of AA who believed in us, members of AA had themselves a dual problem at that time and recognized that. They came and helped us get started again. But again and again this happened in this organization. One person would try to dominate the whole movement. And every time it happened we began to die. Because the Traditions go down the drain when we try this. And one of the first things that we said when we met as a group in that house, number "one" up there [pointing to visual aids] where we formed those By-laws that Bob was talking about; where we sat together trying to iron out some of the things we wanted to do. We came down to very simple ideas: "Number one. That we believed that this program of twelve steps would work for

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addicts as well as for alcoholics. Two. That the Traditions must be followed if we were to grow, and grow as a fellowship that could stand on its own feet aside from and away from Alcoholics Anonymous. We could take our own place as a fellowship, and not be dominated by or affiliated with anything of anybody else. And we said we would keep a place open for at least two years—and if, in two years, one or two addicts showed that this program could work for them; we would have felt that it had been worthwhile. That, fundamentally, was what we started with. But we argued about it for about six weeks before we put those By-laws on paper, and then we didn't want the By-laws. The sooner, I figured, we could get rid of the By-laws, the better off we'd be; because the policies of the Traditions are enough to guide us in what we have to do. The Traditions will save us from ourselves. And this is what is so necessary for a fellowship like ours. This is life -- the other way is death as we know it. But how hard and how difficult it is not to go back? How difficult!!! -

Naming Narcotics Anonymous—"The first big order of business we had when we got together was the name. I was the first Chairman of what we then called - uh - nothing. AANA, that's what it was called and I said, "You simply can't do that. You made me your Chairman, we're gonna have to find another name, we can't call ourselves AANA or NAAA." And the Committee who voted me the Chairman immediately vetoed what I said. Right, that's a good way to start. They vetoed everything I said the first night, so I thought I was off to a pretty good start. I wasn't going to get away with any horse shit from these people. They were going to find out what was right to do. And so the first order of business was to contact Alcoholics Anonymous to find out if we could use their name; and they found out that you couldn't do it. So I got the satisfaction, at least, of being right on the first thing that they vetoed. That made me feel a little better, you know, because I got news for you, I get my own way most of the time. I know you recognize that, because so do you. That's the kind of people we are. But we had a lot of trouble when we first got together; because I'm just like you are and you're just like I am. You're going to have to show me that what you say is going to work or I ain't going to go along. And thank God we are like that. I think that's what makes this program work eventually.

Meeting Places ~"It was very hard to find a place to meet; after we got together and agreed what we were going to do. You couldn't find a hall to meet in. Nobody would allow us in. They didn't trust us in any way, shape, or form. And it's pretty sad when you go from one place to another after you've got something real good going and nobody will let you use their hall. You know! Eventually we did find a Salvation Army hall and they allowed us to use it for five dollars a month. You know, that's pretty good, but there were no facilities there. There was one little restroom with a hand basin and a bowl in there, and that was it. There was no kitchen, so we had to go out and buy a little electric stove and some coffee pots, some cups—which I still have at home. I found them just this week; I've had them all these years.

We used to give them to each other because this week you might meet at my place, which is the second picture up there [pointing to visual aids] - and next week we might meet at your place. So you took the cups with you so everybody would have a cup to get their coffee in. You know, not many of us had more than a couple of cups in our houses then; in fact, not many of us were working. But that's the way it was. I still have those things. On the table here is the copy that we drew up, or rather Doris drew up, and Guilda, for the newspaper as our announcement that we were now in business. You know, we now had a hall, we now had a set of By-laws, and we now had a purpose. And it says here: -

Transcript of announcement (intended for publication) to attract addicts to Narcotics Anonymous

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS, OUR PURPOSE—This is an informal group of drug addicts, banded together to help one another renew their strength in remaining free of drug addiction. Our precepts are patterned after those of Alcoholics Anonymous, to which all credit is given and precedence is acknowledged. We claim no originality but since we believe that the causes of alcoholism and addiction are basically the same we wish to apply to our lives the truths and principles which have benefited so many otherwise helpless individuals. We believe that by so doing we may regain and maintain our health and sanity. It shall be the purpose of this group to endeavor to foster a means of rehabilitation for the addict, and to carry a message of hope for the future to those who have become enslaved by the use of habit forming drugs.—

**Starting Monday Night Oct. 5, 1953
Each Monday Night Thereafter at 5:30 P.M.
Corner of Cantara and Clybourn, Sun Valley, Calif.
Directly Behind Sunland Lumber Company**

"I got news for you, the Sunland Lumber Company is now defunct, but we're still living. The Salvation Army hall is still there—there are two pictures if it up on the top line [pointing to visual aid] . It is now a Spanish church. Some of the other pictures up there are where we had some of our "Rabbit Meetings". We called them "Rabbit Meetings" then because we never knew where we were going to meet. If there were five or six of us at a meeting tonight we decided then whose apartment or whose house we'd have the meeting in next week. And you would take the cups and sugar bowls and the format with you, you know, and then we'd meet at your place next week. "It wasn't that we who were getting into the program then were so afraid of the law but the newcomers were scared to death. I made a sign and we put it outside of the front door of the church there - referring to visual aid- (about twice the size of this - three times the size of that) that said NA Meeting tonight at 8:30. And then we opened the door for business and we'd get about a dozen alcoholics in there who came to help us. And then a car would pull down around the corner slowly and they'd look at the sign and then they'd split.

A visit to the LAPD—"Nobody trusted nobody. You know they thought it was staked out. They wouldn't believe us when we told them there was no surveillance. And we weren't just too sure in the

beginning ourselves. Because as a group we decided we were going to get right with the law at least and we went down to the Narcotics Division. And we told them, we didn't ask them, we told them we were going to have a meeting of addicts. And they raised their eyebrows a little bit when we first mentioned it. But there were five of us down there. A. Miller (I forget if he was a Lieutenant or a Captain then) he listened and he said, "It's about time something like this happened. I've been trying to help addicts for years and with no success— I can't help anybody." And so he called in a lieutenant to listen in on our conversation and see what he thought. And he was a hard-nosed, old style, hope-to-die cop who knew for sure (who knew for sure) that none of us could recover, you know. And he listened and Miller was saying, "I like that idea." "I'll go along with that idea." "I buy what you have to say." "I'll do everything I can to help you." All the way down the line he was all for us. He kept his word, by the way. And he said to this lieutenant, "What do you think?" And the lieutenant said, "Ain't gonna work, once a junkie always a junkie, you know that, God Damn it. There's never any of them gonna get any better. I don't care what you say, I don't care what these people say, it ain't gonna work." "And old Pat, who was sitting back there with his mouth shut all this time and never opened his mouth says, "Lieutenant, my name is so-and-so, I was born and raised in such-and-such a place, I got arrested the first time for such-and-such a thing, and I was sentenced such-and-such a time for so many years; and starting there I want you to go back and check my record all the way through. I've been in every God Damned Federal Pen, except Danamora, in the country. I'm the last of the Petermen, and I haven't had a bit of Junk for 18 years. I haven't been in Jail for 18 years; and this program works for me. Now you look it up and prove it to yourself because I was never out of jail from the time I was a kid until the time I found this program." And the guy didn't know what to say. Pat said, "Now I mean it, check it out." Whether the guy ever checked it out, I don't know; but I know that the police department and the Narcotics Division kept their word to us. And they never staked us out, they never busted us in any way, shape, or form—never roused us coming or going to meetings. And so, we in turn kept our word, we policed ourselves and we followed the Traditions as best we knew how. And this is what has made us basically begin to grow in the past 12 years. "A few of the other buildings (on that, a few of the pictures up there) [referring to visual aids] were men, one man in particular, who started AA within some of the Federal Institutions many years ago and helped us start Narcotics Anonymous in Walla Walla, in San Quentin, and a few other places. Les has since died, too. (I don't know what the hell I made these notes for, anyway, 'cause I'm not following them.)

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions—"We did begin in 1960 again, the beginning of 1960, with about four people. And started to build the group up again according to the original concept; the Steps for the individual and the Traditions for the groups. And we've been growing slowly and steadily ever since. Primarily, I believe, we've been growing because we haven't had the domination of any one group of people; particularly in the area that most of us

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know—California area. I think primarily that is the reason, the main reason for the big difference. Plus the fact that more and more addicts know the value of twelve step work. It used to be we could never get addicts to go on twelve step calls. Some strange things used to happen, you know, when about eight or ten addicts, in a group, would descend on some poor, unsuspecting little junkie who was dying in a back room someplace in his mother's home. And we'd descend on him like hornets — whooo! You know! Everybody'd get scared. We had to go in groups because nobody would go alone or singly or in couples to go. Everybody was afraid they would get loaded if they went and called on another (another) addict. So that was another one of the myths that we build up ourselves: That we can't go and call on somebody who's using without using ourselves. One of the greatest lies of all time. You know it ain't true, not a damn bit true. And this is one of the reasons we grow. Plus the fact that we follow, possibly, the best thing that any of us can do, we are willing to listen. Bob, what did you do with my other notes? Steal them? Oh, here they are. "I resigned one time as chairman of NA before I really got going again, because of the very thing I'm talking about. I resigned because we were not following the Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous. It's a strange thing, I said I was going to mention it tonight and then I decided against it—but I am going to talk about it. Because actually, although we had meetings going for several years, (about four years) there was no Narcotics Anonymous. Because one of the things we said: That we would call ourselves an NA Organization and Fellowship as long as we used the Steps and the Traditions. So when we stopped using the Traditions and became a one-man-rule proposition there was on longer really any NA. I mention it for two reasons; because it died out and there were only a few of us left, but it also points out the fact that this program, once we begin to live it, we can't let it go, it's going to grow again. This program is not going to die out, if all of us in this room right now—and this is a miracle in itself—if all of us in this room don't make it, this fellowship is not going to die out. Not because I say so, but because that's the very nature of recovery: That once there is the knowledge that something can be done it is never lost. Somebody will pick it up and continue.

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Watching a newcomer

I have been watching this particular newcomer for the last twenty-nine days, and it has been wonderful watching her learn and grow and become involved. She got a sponsor and a coffee commitment. She reads *Just for Today* every morning and the Basic Text every night. She shares at meetings, and she reaches out, too.

I have had many listening sessions with this person, trying only to share about what the program and recovery mean to me—you know, my experience, strength, and hope.

Things seem to be going well for this newcomer, feelings and all.

Today this person got an email suggesting that she drop everything and go to another state for a dream job. As I watched the excitement escalate in my

fellow addict, I could not help but wonder, "What about your recovery? What about your daughter? What happened to 'just for today'?"

I pondered all this for a moment. Then I remembered my own journey. There was a time in my recovery when I decided to put money and education and even service ahead of my own recovery.

There were people who tried to point this out to me, but at the time I could not hear. Eventually I ended up relapsing, and my physical and spiritual health almost vanished completely, not to mention the destruction I caused in my relationship and with my family.

There is a theme resonating through my mind these days: *Nothing*, absolutely nothing, is more important than my recovery today.

I know that without my recovery I will surely die. No job, no relationship, no fantasy or feeling is worth throwing away my recovery.

Today, my quality of life is far more important to me than the quantity of things I may be able to achieve for some short-lived period of time.

I do get frustrated sometimes, because things do not happen in my time or because I do not want to go through certain feelings, but I know better than that today.

Today I am grateful for my Higher Power, the NA Fellowship, and the steps and traditions, for without NA this addict has no life worth living.

Dawn W, California, USA

Reprinted from the July 2004 NA Way

NA Bullshit Bingo ~ Round 2

Never	Couldn't reach anyone	Powerless over DRUGS	The phone is so heavy	I haven't worked that step, but ...
Dual/multi/cross addicted...	All I can do	Can't find a sponsor	Sobriety	Always
Too busy	Double-dipping	Addict, Alcoholic	You should ...	I know I've already shared but,
I don't know much about that, but ...	I think I want to	I've done my fair share	Have to	I don't have anything to offer
Clean & Sober	Made me	I know ...	I don't know about you but,	In my opinion



FORTY-EIGHT MUSTS IN NARCOTICS ANONMOUS

1. Everything that occurs in the course of N.A. service MUST be motivated by the desire to more successfully carry the message of recovery to the addict who. still suffers. - pg. XVI
2. We MUST always remember that as individual members, groups, and service committees we are not and should never be in competition with each other. pg. XVI
3. We MUST face our problems and our feelings. - pg. 15
4. "We are people with the disease of addiction who MUST abstain from all drugs in order to recover. - pg. 18
5. A second admission MUST be made before our foundation is complete. pg. 21
6. We MUST be done with the past and not cling to it. - pg. 28
7. Assets MUST also be considered, if we are to get an accurate and complete picture of ourselves. - pg. 28
8. Although He already knows, the admission MUST come from our own lips to be truly effective. Step five is not simply a reading of step four. - pg. 31
9. We MUST carefully choose the person who is to hear our fifth step. pg. 31
10. We MUST make sure that they know what we are doing and why we are doing it." - pg. 31
11. We MUST be exact. - pg. 32
12. We MUST realize that we are not perfect. - pg. 35
13. Our experience tells us that we MUST become willing this step will have any effect. - pg. 36
14. We MUST separate what was done to us from what we did to others. - pg. 37
15. As with each step we MUST, be thorough. - pg. 38
16. We MUST remember the pain that they have known. - pg. 40
17. It is said that for meditation to be of value, the results MUST show in our daily lives. - pg. 46
18. We MUST give freely and gratefully that which has been freely and gratefully given to us. - pg. 47
19. Our disease involved much more than just using drugs, so our recovery MUST involve much more than simple abstinence. - pg. 53
20. We MUST give up this old concept and face the fact that reality and life go on, whether we choose to accept them or not. - pg. 53
21. When we are prepared, we MUST try out our newly found way of life. We learn -the program won't work when we try to adapt it to our life.
22. We MUST learn to adapt our life to the program. - pg. 55
23. Unity is a MUST in Narcotics Anonymous. - pg. 60
24. We MUST live and work together as a group to ensure that in a storm our ship does not sink and our members do not perish. - pg. 60
25. We MUST be constantly on guard that our decisions are truly an expression of God's will. - pg. 61
26. An atmosphere of recovery in our groups is one of the most valued assets, and we MUST guard it carefully, lest we lose it to politics and personalities. - pg. 61
27. We MUST remember that officers have been Placed in trust that we are trusted servants, and that at no time do any of us govern. - pg. 61
28. Our Sixth Tradition tells us some of the things we MUST do to preserve and protect our primary purpose. - pg. 66
29. We MUST first understand what N.A. is. Narcotics Anonymous is addicts who have the desire to stop using, and have joined together to do so. - pg. 70
30. In order to achieve our spiritual aim, Narcotics Anonymous MUST be known and respected. - pg. 71
31. To improve ourselves takes effort and since there is no way in the world to graft a new idea on a closed mind, an opening MUST be made somehow. - pg. 75
32. We MUST relearn many things that we have forgotten and develop a new approach to life if we are to survive. - pg. 77
33. We realize we MUST do something. - pg. 78 (read the prior sentences)
34. When we feel the old urges come over us, we think there MUST be something wrong with us, and that other people in Narcotics Anonymous couldn't possibly understand. - pg. 79
35. We come here powerless and the power that we seek comes to us through other people in Narcotics Anonymous, but we MUST reach out for it. - pg. 79
36. Recovery found in Narcotics Anonymous MUST come from within, and no one stays clean for anyone but themselves. - pg. 80
37. if we have relapsed it is important to keep in mind that we MUST get back to meetings as soon as possible. - pg. 80
38. We MUST totally surrender ourselves to the program. - pg. 81
39. We MUST use what we learn or we will lose it in a relapse. - pg. 81
40. We MUST, use what we learn or we will lose it, no matter how long we have been clean. - pg. 82
41. Eventually we are shown that we MUST get honest or we will use again. - pg. 82
42. We MUST smash the illusion that we can do it alone. - pg. 82
43. Staying clean MUST always come first. - pg. 82
44. Some things we MUST accept, others we can change. - pg. 92
45. We MUST be willing to do whatever is necessary to recover. - pg. 93
46. We never know when the time will come when we MUST put forth all the effort and strength we have just to stay clean. - pg. 93
47. No matter how painful life's tragedies can be for us, one thing is clear we MUST not use no matter what! - pg. 98
48. In order to receive we MUST be willing to give. - pg. 102

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The Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship Grows—"We've come an awful long way. I paraphrase commercials an awful lot and there's a good paraphrase in our structure of Virginia Slims, "You've come a long way baby (you know) to get where you are now." And, I'm not going to say a hell of a lot more because, uh, I'm too high right now; I'm going through the ceiling right now. "We're growing faster now than we ever did before. We're in more states, we're in more countries, and there are more opportunities for each and every one of us to find our place in Narcotics Anonymous and carry the message of recovery to addicts all over the world now. We can no longer try to contain it here in California or in this country. But it's going to take everything all of us got, it takes everything we've got to stay on this program. This is a blood and guts program. This is not a program for panty wastes—but there are no panty wastes in NA. If you're an addict you've got a lot of guts to begin with, or you wouldn't be here; so let's put them to good use. Let's take this thing that we've got and make something better, even than it is, out of it. You know that I've said many times, a long time ago, that a man without a dream is only half a man, and a fellowship without a vision is a farce. And I still believe that and know damn well that we can find fulfillment in living a day at a time here. And a day at a time our vision and our Fellowship can become a greater reality. They're the things that I'm still interested in.

Carry the Message "Two years ago at the convention, when I had just regained my voice, I said then that as long as I live I would use what voice and what strength I have to further the efforts of Narcotics Anonymous and that other beautiful fellowship I belong to, Alcoholics Anonymous—and I intend to do that. But it's going to take all of me, and it's going to take all of you, and all the people that you're going to talk to, and all of the people you're going to carry the message to, to make this a greater reality. There are people out there on La Cienega Boulevard dying of our disease. There are people all over this world dying of our disease, and, believe it or not, we are truly the only people who can really help them. Let's never forget that. You and I have been given, through illness—through suffering—and through disease, a talent for helping other human beings like ourselves. Let's never forget that

