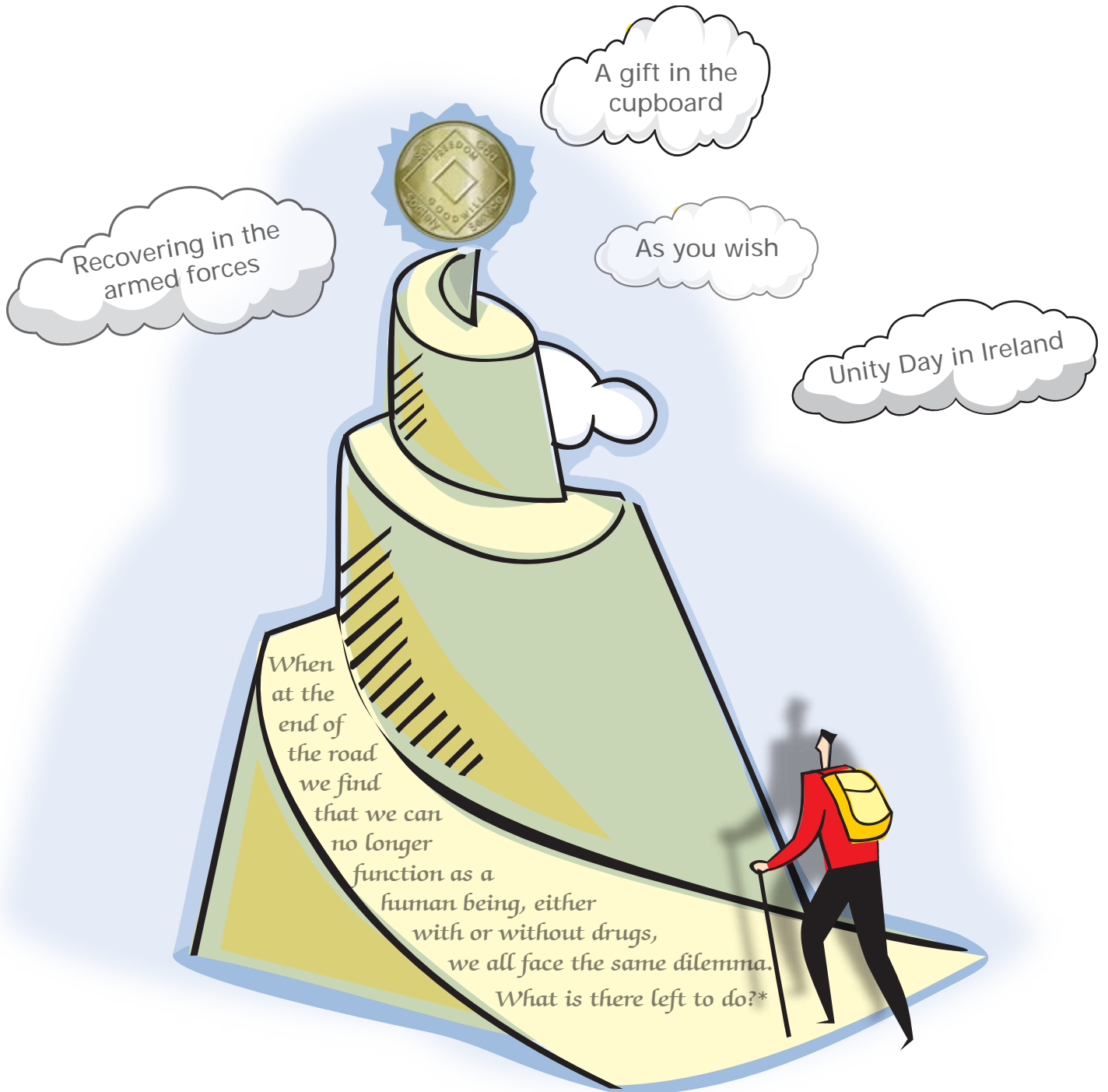


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From the editor

Last year around this time, a close friend in recovery started talking about "creed" at meetings. This is one of the words in that list of characteristics that won't prevent you from joining us: "Anyone may join us, regardless of...". Many of us never stop to think about our creed. We may not even know what the word means. Creed is about a person's set of beliefs. For many it's religious beliefs; for others it's simply the principles by which they live life. I realized I didn't think specifically about my creed until my friend brought it up, so I was glad that her awareness awakened mine.

I found myself paying more attention to how I was living, and whether my day-to-day life reflected my creed. The past year has been one to challenge, broaden, and strengthen the principles that make up my creed: honesty, open-mindedness, willingness; surrender and acceptance, faith, service, persistence, tolerance, and respect, to name just a few. I know an addict who maintains a list of spiritual principles that he adds to as life opens his heart to one; it's a really long list. Simply focusing on my creed has made a difference in how I approach each day. As we begin this new year, I think I'll continue following my friends' experiences by keeping an eye on these spiritual principles and the way I practice them in my life. It seems that as the list gets longer, my life becomes richer.

De J, Editor

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The NA Way Magazine welcomes letters from all readers. Letters to the editor can respond to any article that has appeared in *The NA Way*, or can simply be a viewpoint about an issue of concern in the NA Fellowship. Letters should be no more than 250 words, and we reserve the right to edit. All letters must include a signature, valid address, and phone number. First name and last initial will be used as the signature line unless the writer requests anonymity.

The *NA Way Magazine*, published in English, Farsi, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish, belongs to the members of Narcotics Anonymous. Its mission, therefore, is to provide each member with recovery and service information, as well as recovery-related entertainment, which speaks to current issues and events relevant to each of our members worldwide. In keeping with this mission, the editorial staff is dedicated to providing a magazine which is open to articles and features written by members from around the world, as well as providing current service and convention information. Foremost, the journal is dedicated to the celebration of our message of recovery—"that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live."

*Cover quote: White Booklet, p12.

What feelings may come

I have been in a lot of emotional pain over the last few months. A broken heart compounded by a couple of deeply hurtful incidents led me to a very dark place. It is one of the issues in recovery that I hear about again and again, but rarely do people communicate clearly what they do with that pain. I know people talk about "secondary addictions," a concept I don't really agree with, but I do think lots of members deal with this pain through various means. Pokies (an Australian slot machine-type game), sex, food, money, TV, just tuning out; whatever your particular gig is—I'm not sure we are very good at feeling pain, rather than avoiding it.

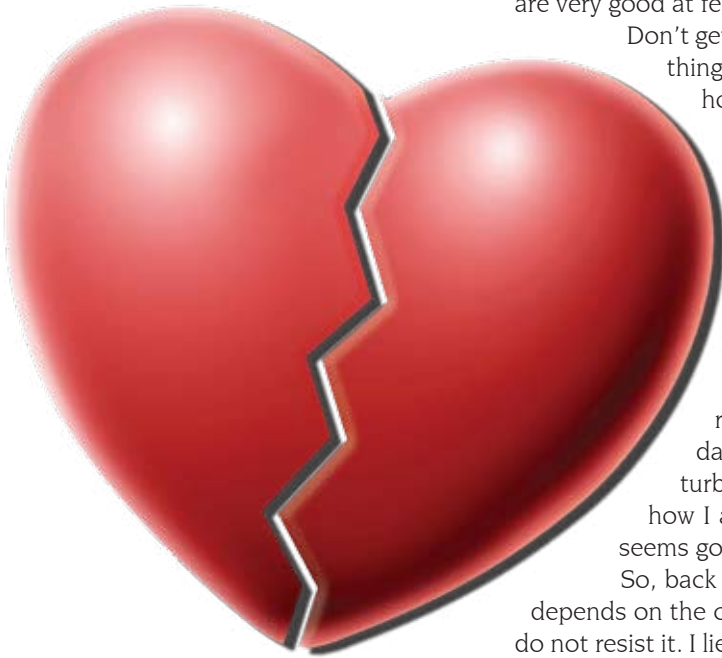
Don't get me wrong, I don't care or judge if people are doing all those other things (pokies, sex, food, money, etc.). We all live in differing measures however we have to, to stay clean and enjoy life. And for me it is important not to judge. I don't think it is possible to *feel* all the time anyway. I know I can't handle it; I've tried—and that's what I'm talking about: trying to feel! The very thing I avoided for my whole using, the very thing that makes life real. Feelings are facts, in my opinion. Sometimes feelings are the *only* facts. I know what people are saying when they say, "Feelings aren't facts," but I think that has more to do with the newcomer and overcoming compulsions.

I think there are two lives we live. One is the outer life, which doesn't really change from day to day. We wake up, go to the bathroom, shower, eat breakfast, go to work, etc. In some ways, every day plays out much the same, but inside, the way we feel can be a turbulent sea of drama, fear, turmoil, or joy. When someone asks me how I am going, I almost always respond on that level. Whether my life seems good or not depends on how I feel, and lately that is not good at all.

So, back to the point: What do I do with all that pain? This is my answer: It depends on the cause of the pain. If I don't know the cause, I let it wash over me. I do not resist it. I lie down quietly and feel it. For every feeling resisted, I think it grows and gets worse, and sometimes it can become a monster. But I think that two of the great gifts we have been given are tears and talking—to cry the dark cloud out 'til the sky turns blue, even if that takes years, and to talk with people who love us, even when we are at our worst; to accept ourselves for our upset, express it, and, if we can, share it with another.

My upset, though triggered in the present, has roots that grow all the way down into my childhood—and without allowing these emotions to rise to the surface, I cannot dredge the cellar of my soul, which I genuinely want to do. When I am rejected or hurt or betrayed in some way, I experience a very particular pain that seems disproportionate to the situation, perhaps because the pain I packed away during my childhood and using is still there, archived in the treasure chest of memory and ready to be reopened. I couldn't handle it at the time, but maybe I can now, because I have some time up, I am safe in the program, and I am not afraid to feel.

I also think pain can be seen as an indicator that something is wrong, a signpost that directs us to that which needs to be resolved. Many times I have had dramas with people, or resentments, or I have done things wrong for which I needed to apologize. I think this is one of the other great gifts of recovery—the ability to sincerely say "sorry."



Whether we are hearing it or saying it, a genuine apology can have great impact and make a huge difference. It can be the difference between the end of a friendship and its survival. It can remove severe pain in the blink of an eye. The sincere apology is an emotional connector that brings people back together. Step Ten is supremely important to our ongoing sense of humility.

At other times, there are complex human situations that arise, especially in small communities like ours, where the only resolution is to choose the lesser of bad options available to us—but still, we have a choice in how we act and deal with the feelings of it.

Sometimes things can't be resolved, for whatever reason—the person isn't there, or they are not willing, or a host of other possibilities—but to dredge the soul by feeling, and to try to understand the cause of the pain and repair it, is, I believe, a major part of our spiritual path.

A set of chemical-free solutions to these experiences—not easy, but rich and rewarding. I am not afraid of what life may hold and what feelings may come.

Tim B, New South Wales, Australia

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As you wish

Many of you took the time to complete our "Letter to the Editor" form that was included in the July 2007 issue of the magazine. This questionnaire asked what you like and don't like about *The NA Way*, what you'd like to see more of, your thoughts on the electronic subscription, and your best ideas for some really cool things we could do with the magazine. We appreciate the responses you mailed, faxed, and emailed us, and also the forms that were completed and submitted at WCNA-32. We're in the process of reading through all the feedback submitted, but we felt there was a strong enough response in one area that we wanted to discuss it with you as soon as we could.

Many people said they would like to see more articles on NA's Twelve Steps and Traditions and on the Twelve Concepts for NA Service. In response, this issue includes an article about a member's Fourth Step, but it might surprise you to learn that we don't often receive articles on these topics. We did receive an article on Tradition One from a member who offered to write a twelve-part series on the traditions. Our editorial board discussed this, but we hesitated to publish a series of just one person's interpretation of the steps, traditions, or concepts. It seems to fit more with the way we do things here in NA to encourage all readers to share their experience.

We also agreed that our quarterly publication doesn't lend itself well to a structured series on the steps, traditions, and concepts where we would, for example, cover one through three in January, four through six in April, and so on. This means you can write on any of these at any time—no specific deadlines; just share with us when and as you wish.

To get your creative juices flowing and get you thinking about your understanding of and experiences with the traditions, we're including an excerpt from the Tradition One essay submitted by the member mentioned above:

The First Tradition is frequently raised in discussing the merits of common needs meetings. "Our common welfare must come first," the First Tradition says. How can a meeting catering to the needs of a subset of addicts truly promote our common welfare?

The problem with this line is that people in the majority often assume that their own "common welfare" is the same as everyone else's. But everyone does not face identical issues in trying to stay clean. To truly reflect the common welfare of diverse addicts with different needs and different issues, common needs meetings are a requirement to assure that "our common welfare" actually does come first, and they are not a burden to that end. If we are truly to carry the message to all addicts who suffer, in my opinion, the fellowship has a duty to ensure that people with distinct needs can find a space within NA where they may address those needs in peace.

Remember, *The NA Way Magazine* "belongs to the members of Narcotics Anonymous...In keeping with this mission, the editorial staff is dedicated to providing a magazine which is open to articles and features written by members from around the world..." We hope many of you will be inspired to write something. We're also dedicated to taking care of all your punctuation, grammar, and spelling; so don't worry about *how* you write it; just put pen to paper and share your experience, strength, and hope in the heartfelt way you would if you were sitting at a meeting. We'll take care of the commas and capitals



Homecoming

It was two days before Thanksgiving, and I was finally being released from the state penitentiary. I'd been down ten years, and they say mankind's knowledge doubles every five years. Wow, do I have some catching up to do. Whatever, it's good to be walking out the gate.

I had been going to NA meetings in the joint, and I really thought I was prepared for my re-entry into the world. I had made arrangements for someone I didn't really know, but had met through our meetings, to pick me up at the gate, take me to my first meeting, and then on to a halfway house. I was hoping he would be my sponsor, too, because my sponsor was still locked up.

I walked out the door early, at 7:15 am, only to find that my ride wasn't there. Panic set in immediately! I had a small check I needed to cash. I waited a spell, but no one showed up. I decided to walk downtown, a short distance away. I started going over in my mind what the little NA pamphlet said, were key things to remember (IP #23, *Staying Clean on the Outside*): "Don't use, no matter what." I started with that. "Go to an NA meeting." I headed out, hoofing it. "Ask your Higher Power to keep you clean today." I made conscious contact with my Higher Power as I walked.

It wasn't long before I came to a check-cashing joint, showed them my temporary ID, and paid the fee to get some cash. I remembered that the pamphlet said, "Call your sponsor." I tried to call the guy who was to give me a ride. No answer. My panic elevated to fear, because I had the worst part of the day's journey ahead, through "Felony Flats."

I had made it through ten years of prison life; maybe I was due for a bump. That wouldn't mean I couldn't still work the program, right? I was getting closer to that risky neighborhood. I had to walk past or turn in. I thought of the IP again: "Talk to other addicts." "Read NA literature." "Work the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous." But still, I had all that time to make up. I started to think about things—unhealthy things, disturbing things. Then I thought about other things I'd heard in meetings. "One is too many, and a thousand never enough." I started to try all the tools in my toolbox. There I was, literally at a crossroads. I sat down on a bus bench. What was I to do? Walk across the street and get some, or walk on to a meeting?

I heard a car horn and looked up to see two dudes in the front seat. The guy sitting shotgun was hanging out the window, waving frantically at me. It was my friend, the one who was supposed to pick me up. They pulled up and he got out, helped me with my stuff, shook my hand, and apologized all at the same time as he stuffed me into the back seat. His car had broken down and he couldn't fix it, so he called his sponsor and explained what was going on; his sponsor had driven him to pick me up. My new friend could tell I was shaken up by his tardiness.

Just that quickly, we were all off to my first meeting in the free world, and just that quickly I had a sponsor. He was chattering on the way to the meeting, both of us overjoyed that things had worked out. He asked me about the halfway house and if we were going to have a Thanksgiving dinner, and I replied, "Yes, and a good one, too!"

"Homie," Oregon, USA

I had been going to NA meetings in the joint, and I really thought I was prepared for my re-entry into the world.

A gift in the cupboard

I made a promise to myself that, after my ten-year recovery birthday several months ago, I would plan a weekend away to treat myself. As it worked out, an NA convention was coming, and the timing was right, so away I went to rent a condo by the beach for a weekend convention of NA. I had an opportunity to spend time with sponsees and do step work. This was a great experience of being a part of, as well as enjoying my own company during that weekend.

A few weeks ago, I decided to take my daughter to the ocean for a weekend. This was also where the NA convention was held. The good memories were present when we drove into town.

When we got to the condo, after a hot drive, we unpacked and got settled. I was putting things away in the kitchen and opened the cupboard. I stepped back for a moment and felt a sense of being in the presence of recovery. There was a coffee mug from the convention looking right at me: "Lost Dreams Awaken—Clean and Free 2007."

I felt overwhelmed and full of gratitude. My first thought was, "I am never alone when I am in recovery." I have received many gifts from my Higher Power, and I don't believe in coincidence. Whether someone left it by accident or on purpose, doesn't really matter. I just remember how I felt, and that feeling has stuck with me ever since. That small occurrence was powerful and made an impact.

Don't get me wrong; I did think about taking the coffee mug home, but remembering that I don't practice dishonesty today, I left it. I also decided that if someone in recovery is having a hard time or needs a reminder, that coffee mug could give them hope that they don't have to be alone. Just reach out, and it's right in front of you—from one addict to another.

Diane P, Washington, USA



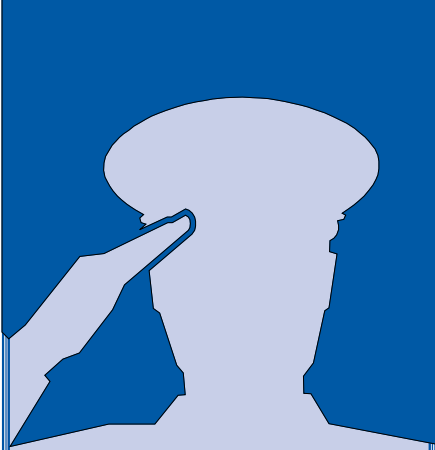
Behind the walls in Bahrain

By the grace of God, I came to know about NA when I was in a rehab clinic. Through the members who used to come for meetings once a week, I was introduced to recovering drug addicts who welcomed me with open arms. This was in 1995. I was in rehab for a month, and then I continued my association with NA for almost three months, during which time I attended regular meetings and made up my mind never to relapse.

But I relapsed after three months, and continued this way on and off until 14 March 1996. From then on, I went back to NA and started attending meetings, not only in Bahrain but also over in the Persian Gulf. Once again I relapsed, in 2003, and this was the cause of my downfall. I lost everything that I had built up, and made new drug cases which have put me behind bars. My sentence will end in 2009, and I am waiting to be sentenced in yet another case.

Now that I am in prison, I am fully involved in the NA way and I attend NA meetings. The Twelve Steps were my only answer to my addiction. Through the steps, just for today by the grace of God, I am clean and living a full and happier life now than ever before.

Salahiddin A, Bahrain



Are you an NA member serving in the armed forces? We know that seeking recovery while serving in the military can be a challenge for NA members. We hope those of you who are currently serving or who have served in the past will share your experience, strength, and hope with NA *Way* readers; especially your fellows who are also serving in the military. We would like to include your stories in upcoming issues of *The NA Way Magazine*. Please send your input to naway@na.org or mail it to us at *The NA Way Magazine*; NA World Services; PO Box 9999; Van Nuys, CA 91409 USA.

Step Four

In working the Twelve Steps this time with my sponsor, I was instructed for each step to read about that step for ten consecutive days, and then write what the step meant to me and what the spiritual principle was for that step.

When I worked Step Four with my sponsor, she suggested that I send in what I wrote to *The NA Way* for review and consideration. I did not, however, follow her suggestion at the time. Now that I have completed the Twelve Steps, she again suggested that I send in what I wrote about Step Four, and I am following her suggestion.

This step gives me the opportunity to honestly look at myself. It allows me to take off the masks, break down the walls, strip naked, and look at who I am. I am given the opportunity to remember the dreams, hopes, desires, and goals I had as a kid and to see where I lost track of those things.

This step helps me look at the choices I made in my life and reflect on why I made certain choices, how I came to make those choices, and just who the person was who was choosing those things. I can reflect on what I was thinking and feeling while making these choices.

This step helps me understand the paths I chose and see the mistakes made, and the paths taken that were good for me. Step Four helps me find myself again, to reconnect with the person I want to be and have always been, deep down inside. It is like the reawakening of a spirit that has been suppressed for a long, long time.

It is really the step for me that makes me feel like I am working my recovery, really looking into the essence of who I am: good, bad, ugly, and beautiful. It is the step where I can begin to forgive myself and go forward.

The spiritual principle of this step is courage.

Renee M, Hawaii, USA

Earning keytags

When I discovered that keytags are given for cleantime, I was ecstatic. I was already a keytag fanatic! After ninety-two days, I found out I could purchase NA keytags at the Michigan Service Office, so I purchased the entire set. I relapsed four days later.

It took me nine years to come back. I thought everyone who had seen me back in 1997 would have "graduated" or died by the time I came back. I was shocked to find many familiar faces at meetings. I didn't listen to anything anyone had to say, but I became obsessed with our literature. I wanted to know everything about this program. I was going to be the smartest, best-informed addict ever to hit NA! I went to the service office again and bought every bit of literature they had (I think). Well, at least I didn't spend it on drugs. I stayed clean for eleven months, but I relapsed again. I was out for five months. And I was still obsessed with the keytags.

The obsessive and compulsive nature of our disease is apparent to me now. By my own admission, I truly believe I am an addict. My clean date is 13 August 2007. I cannot count the days, as I also obsess over numbers. I am practicing the art of listening and understanding what it means to identify with other addicts. I still have all my literature, and I continue to read it. I have a great sponsor who cuts right to the heart of matters. I will earn my keytags. I have already earned the most important one: the white surrender/welcome tag.

Dan O, Michigan, USA



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The color of recovery

Every group has its own personality, and at some groups, this is expressed in part through keytag descriptions during cleantime celebrations. Have you been to a meeting where keytags are described like this?

Welcome—White

The international sign of surrender. You never have to use again, just for today! If you want to use, put this keytag in your mouth; when it dissolves, you can use!

Thirty Days—Orange

The color for caution. You should be cautious at thirty days; avoid old playmates, playgrounds, and playthings. "Orange" you glad you made it, or "orange" you glad you're here and not wearing an orange (county jail) jumpsuit?

Sixty Days—Green

The grass is always greener on the NA side of the street. Green for "go." Go to a lot of meetings!

Ninety Days—Red or Maroon

Red means stop. Stop and take a look at your program. You are no longer "marooned" on that island of isolation.

Six Months—Basic Blue

The color of the sky, because the sky's the limit for you in NA! The color of our Basic Text (hopefully you've read it by now).

Nine Months—Yellow

The color of the sun, which you can see when you get up in the morning instead of using into the night. The color of urine—as in, "you're in" the right place, and you should be able to pass a urine test with nine months clean.

One Year—Iridescent, Moon Glow, or Glow in the Dark

It glows in the dark so you don't have to. It glows in the dark, like the glow in our hearts.

Eighteen Months—Gray

Every gray cloud has a silver lining—and the keytag is gray with silver lettering. The color of duct tape—we stuck to the program. Battleship gray—the war is over!

Multiples of Years—Black

The color of coal, which turns into diamonds when it's compressed—and we are all diamonds in the rough. Black and gold, because you listened to what you were told. Gold and black, because you kept coming back.

Thanks to Mike H, Indiana, USA, and others who shared their local keytag words of wisdom.

Picture this

NA communities are invited to send photographs of their meeting places. We especially welcome photos that include meeting formats, recovery literature, posters, dirty coffee cups, and anything else that makes the meeting place look "lived in." Sorry, we cannot use photos that identify NA members. Please tell us about your meeting, its name, the location and city, how long it has been in existence, and what your format consists of (speaker, participation, etc.).



In 2006, 350 attendees from six countries participated in the first Nepal Regional Convention. Just a year later, in March 2007, more than 600 NA members attended the second NRECNA in Nagarkot, Kathmandu, Nepal. Nagarkot is famous for its view of the Himalayan mountain range and beautiful sunrises. The banner at the entrance to the area where the convention was held welcomed NA members to "the top of the world" because Nagarkot is at one of the highest elevations on earth.

The mandala, made entirely of sand, wheat flour, and colors called "abir," is a traditional art form. At the end of the cleantime countdown, as everyone stands in a circle, the member with the least cleantime lights his or her candle and passes it to everyone else to light their candles, and then everyone places their candles around the mandala. The candles symbolize a break from the dark life of addiction to a move into the bright light of a better life in NA. The light of the candle shows the way for addicts who are clean and who are still suffering.

Suyash R, Kathmandu, Nepal





the serenity prayer in irish

a thiarna

cuidigh liom a bheith sásta

glachadh leis an méidnach

féidir liom a athrœ,

tabhair an misneach dom

athrœ a dhéanamh nuair is féider;

ach go mor mor,

tabhair an aigne dom

an dáchinéal a athint – na chéile



And for those of you whose Irish is a little rusty, here's the phonetic pronunciation:

A Heerna
Kiddy lium aveh sawsta
glockoo lesh on made nock
faydir lium a ahroo,
Toor on mishnock dum
ahroo a yaynav noor is faydir;
Ock go more more,
Toor on agna dum
on daw kinawl a ahint um dagh oh kayla
Conor H, Dublin, Ireland

Unity Day 2007

Kilkenny, Ireland



As I walked into the hotel meeting room in Kilkenny, I felt relieved—relieved that I was clean, had made it, and was among my own kind ... home. We were there for the 2007 Unity Day telephone linkup from WCNA-32 in San Antonio, Texas, USA. It was 4:30 pm in Ireland on Sunday, 2 September. There were NA members from Australia, Poland, and England; from within Ireland, there were members from Mayo, Leitrim, Waterford, Carlow, Laois, Kilkenny, Westmeath, Cork, Tipperary, and Dublin.

As I settled into a chair, there was a buzz of expectancy in the air. I got some smiles and nods of recognition. I had just made it in time by the grace of my hp, as I had been with my son at a festival an hour away from the hotel. I was introduced to a woman who, at twenty-seven years clean, is about the most senior member I've met living here in Ireland. She was ready by the phone for the linkup. She knew I'd volunteered to be a "roving reporter" for *The NA Way Magazine* at our Unity Day event, so she quickly hugged me and said, "Get to it, start asking questions over there, huh?" So I did. I asked fellow members what they thought of Unity Day.

Carla from Dublin said, "Marvelous. Wonderful. A good experience to see what's happenin' there from here."

"I came down from Belfast, just to build on friendships I've already made in the fellowship," offered Ger.

Anita, also from Dublin, commented, "I think it's brilliant that you can connect with other members across the world. It's one fellowship, and it doesn't matter how far away you are, we've one message."

"It's fabulous, isn't it?" exclaimed Alan from Limerick.

"It was good to meet people from other groups, and it was a different sort of a thing because it linked with a meeting afterwards with food and all," said Karl from Waterford.

Torie, of the Cork area, said, "I went from the loneliest place in the world to one of the biggest fellowships in the world, and when I saw the scale of it [on Unity Day], it was brilliant. It was overwhelming."

Our friend, Marianna, from Poland, shared with us how to say "just for today" and "keep coming back" in Polish: "Tylko dla dzisiay" and "Zawsze wracaj."

When the meeting started, there was a hush as we listened to hear if we would be mentioned. There was a quiet "awww" as the last location chimed in, and we realized we wouldn't be mentioned this year. But it was fascinating to hear all the different voices coming through from around the world, sharing their message of recovery. And then the speaker started sharing his story. I loved his accent. What a message of hope and honesty and real-life recovery. It blew the socks off of me. I cried through a bit of it, which could have been the chocolate and late night I'd had, or maybe it was realizing we don't have to use and we don't have to die.

After the linkup, we had a cleantime countdown. I got a keytag, and so did everyone in the room. We had more hugs and exchanged numbers before relocating to the local meeting, where members of the region put on a beautiful selection of food for all—sausages, sunflower seeds and salads, muffins, cheesecake, pizzas, teas, and sandwiches. It was a great group of about thirty-five people that turned up with some big beautiful smiles all around the room.

Justine J, Cork, Ireland

A fable about denial



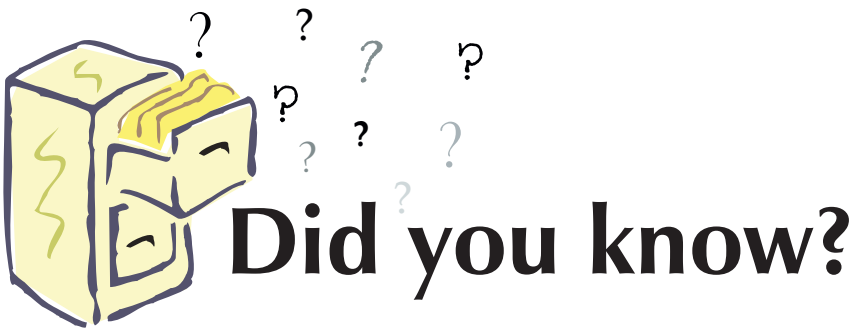
here once was a man who got up in the middle of the night to have a snack. He lit a candle and made his way to the kitchen. He grabbed a sack of apples, sat down at the table, and proceeded to take a big bite from the apple he had selected from the bag. In the dim candlelight, he noticed that his apple had a worm. Frustrated, he blew out the candle and continued eating the worm-infested apple.

Denial is a funny thing. Just because we blind ourselves to the problem doesn't mean it has gone away. Life can't be lived blindly; we have to deal with the problems we have, not just close our eyes and wish things were better. NA teaches us that we have to confront our denial head on.

Moral:

Just like our friend with the apple, we can deny the problems in our lives—but that doesn't mean that they don't exist.

Brandon B, Indiana, USA



The Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous has come a long way since our beginnings in 1953. We have grown from that first meeting in Sun Valley, California, USA, to more than 44,165 weekly meetings in over 127 countries worldwide. Our history is rich with diversity, and we want to share the facts of that history with you—the little-known facts and tidbits of information others might not otherwise know. Share your interesting NA facts with us by email at naway@na.org, by fax at 818.770.0700, or by postal mail at *The NA Way Magazine*; Box 9999; Van Nuys, CA 91409 USA.

- Did you know** in some groups, the person celebrating an NA birthday chooses the format for that day's meeting, and in some groups the celebrant bakes a cake? In other groups, members bring food and refreshments to celebrate NA birthdays at their last meeting of the month.
- Did you know** many groups separate attendees into at least two discussions—one focusing on the newcomer or First Step, and the other a discussion of a chosen topic?
- Did you know** some groups that close with the Serenity Prayer add the word "please" to the end of the prayer, and other groups shout "woo-hoo!" when it's announced that NA literature is free?
- Did you know** there are NA groups that sell soda at their meetings, and others' refreshments range from coffee and tea to "tons of doughnuts," fruit salad, and juice? There are also groups that don't serve any refreshments at all.
- Did you know** excerpts from *Hey! What's the Basket For?* are read in some groups' meeting formats, and many groups include a report from the secretary or treasurer on how much money was collected in the Seventh Tradition?

Thanks to roving reporters at WCNA-32 and Unity Day events in Kansas, USA, and Ontario, Canada.

Cooperative events



During the 2006-2008 conference cycle, NAWS formed partnerships with zonal, regional, and area service committees to increase NA's presence at professional conferences. This collaboration appears to have been successful. During this conference cycle, Narcotics Anonymous was represented in over thirty-five cooperative professional conferences and events. This would not have been possible without help from local trusted servants, with whom NAWS partnered to inform professionals about Narcotics Anonymous. Besides the large number of events in the United States, NA participated in conferences in Lithuania, Slovenia, Sweden, Colombia, the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Canada, and the United Kingdom. We made a concerted effort to carry our message of recovery to professionals in hopes of attracting addicts to NA.

NAWS enjoyed the mutual planning that took place with trusted servants throughout the world, and looks forward to continuing the relationships that were formed and strengthened during this past conference cycle. One of the benefits of these cooperative events was that many trusted servants became familiar with the public relations process, initiating and maintaining relationships with professionals who share a mutual goal with NA: to help addicts find recovery. The experience gained will be very valuable as members continue to represent NA at events in the future, or train other trusted servants to do so. Reports were extremely positive from the regional and area trusted servants who participated in these events. Because of those efforts, more professionals have had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with NA and NA literature and, in turn, offer NA as a viable recovery option to their clients. Participation at professional events and conferences seems to emphasize the second and third bullet points of the NAWS Vision Statement: that "NA communities worldwide and NA World Services work together in a spirit of unity and cooperation to carry our message of recovery;" and that "Narcotics Anonymous has universal recognition and respect as a viable program of recovery."

In the next conference cycle (2008-2010), NAWS is encouraging areas, regions, and zones to continue their participation at these conferences and events and to begin to plan for them. Many of these conferences occur yearly within regions and zones. The efforts to maintain relationships and create new relationships with professionals will better help addicts find NA. This can be a rewarding way to carry the message of recovery. The *Public Relations Handbook*, and its addenda, offer planning tools for regions and areas to use. One aspect of planning is to ensure that the necessary financial and trusted-servant resources are available to continue to represent NA. Financially, NAWS has shared the expense with regions and areas for participation at these events. At this time, NAWS is encouraging



zones, regions, and areas to begin planning for the financial responsibility of participating at professional conferences as a possible long-term goal. Hopefully, the trusted servants who participated in these conferences will share the benefits from their attendance, and budgets will begin to reflect the value of continuing participation.

The *Public Relations Handbook* tells us that the goal of public relations is to establish and maintain relationships with the public. The feedback that NAWS received from the zonal, regional, and area participants at professional events was that the organizers and attendees of the events were very enthusiastic about having NA represented there. We hope local service committees will be able to carry on with that presence, and to continue the relationships they have established.

Is your address up to date?



The mission of *The NA Way Magazine* is "to provide each member with recovery and service information, as well as recovery-related entertainment, which speaks to current issues and events relevant to each of our members worldwide." We're happy to be distributing our magazine to more than 50,000 subscribers, including approximately 41,000 who receive the magazine in print. Unfortunately, we continue to see an increase in the number of copies returned to our office because they are undeliverable to the addresses we have on file or because there are post office box issues. This means we're paying for postage to send the magazine—and for return postage when delivery can't be made.

We want *The NA Way* to be in the hands of subscribers and on tables at NA meetings, not in stacks of returns in our office. Most of all, we want to use our fellowship's resources responsibly in ways that help carry the message of NA recovery.

Please help us spread the word to individuals, groups, and service committees to update mailing information with us on a regular basis.

Choose the easiest way to update your *NA Way* subscription information:

- Online: <http://www.na.org/updateforms/newregfm.htm>
(for groups or service committees)
<http://portaltools.na.org/PortalTools/subscriptions/Login.cfm>
(for individuals)
- By email: fsmail@na.org
- By telephone: 818.773.9999 ext. 771
- By mail: *The NA Way Magazine*; NA World Services;
PO Box 9999; Van Nuys, CA 91409

And thanks for supporting your *NA Way Magazine*!

Primary purpose

"There are many ways of doing things in Narcotics Anonymous. And just as all of us have our own individual personalities, so will your group develop its own identity, its own way of doing things, and its own special knack for carrying the NA message. That's the way it should be. In NA we encourage unity, not uniformity."

The Group Booklet, p. 1

Planting seeds

I recently traveled to Ghana, West Africa, on business, working with a nonprofit organization I founded. My purpose for this trip was to get a forty-foot shipping container of supplies released to several organizations that serve people there with AIDS and people seeking recovery from addiction. The container had been "stuck" in port due to neglect. I was able to arrange for a new sponsor to help with the release of the container, but when we arrived at the port, we learned the container had been seized, and its contents auctioned and sold. I was so angry. How could this have happened? It was a five-year project with support and goods from many, many organizations.

After ten years of practicing the program, I wanted to use. Anger is one of my triggers, especially self-righteous indignation. My saving grace was that in 2004, along with my sponsor and two other addicts, I helped start the first NA meeting in Ghana at the only detox facility in the country. Recovery from addiction was—and is—a new concept in Ghana. There are no professional treatment facilities for addiction.

When we started the NA meeting, there were no twelve-step programs, either, and the meeting struggled for the next three years. The stigma and fear of being labeled an addict kept many people from coming to get help. Since the detox center was for alcohol only, addicts using other drugs were unaware of the meeting. Those who attended could not risk being seen and having their identities made known. People watched who attended the meetings, and the names of some members were made public. Some members, not understanding the principle of anonymity, discussed the wrongdoings of others outside the meeting.

However, after three years of struggle, the group seemed to have stabilized; there were about twenty men present at the meetings I attended after learning the fate of the container. They saved my life! They understood the pain and frustration I was feeling, and they walked with me through my process of acceptance and surrender.

God went before me and worked through us to establish that meeting in 2004. I had no idea then, that starting the meeting would someday be a solution for me, reminding me that even if I thought I wanted to use, it was only a thought. By the grace of God, my clean date is still 25 October 1996. Along with the original meeting, there are now two additional meetings in Ghana: one at the psychiatric ward, in the same hospital where the detox program is located, and another at a church in the center of town.

I thank God for Narcotics Anonymous and the fellowship that keeps growing through its members. I have learned to stay focused on the solution—which, for me, means working the steps, facing my problems, admitting my part, understanding and correcting my mistakes, forgiving the rest, and moving on.

I also want to thank the NA communities in Berkeley, Oakland, Sacramento, and San Francisco, California, for all the support we have been able to get for that first meeting in Ghana. We received over \$3,000 in donations from members to purchase books, CDs, and other NA literature. The seeds have been planted; God does the rest!

Maurice G, California, USA

***I was so angry.
How could this
have happened?***

This is a column for you, about you, and by you. We invite you to share any challenges your group or NA community may have faced, how you reached a solution, or its "special knack" that keeps you coming back!

Roving reporter

Our roving reporters at WCNA-32 scoured the crowds, posing probing questions to NA members from around the world. (They got to know a lot of other recovering addicts and had a really great time, too.) Here a few responses to the question: "What is your favorite quote from NA literature?"

Narcotics Anonymous, our Basic Text

The ultimate weapon for recovery is the recovering addict.

Chapter Three, Why Are We Here

Alcohol is a drug.

Chapter Four, How it Works

The only thing we ask of our members is that they have this desire. Without it they are doomed, but with it miracles will happen

Chapter Six, The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous (Third Tradition)

Many books have been written about the nature of addiction. This book primarily concerns itself with the nature of recovery. If you are an addict and have found this book, please give yourself a break and read it!

Inside front dust cover

It Works: How and Why

Recovery is a process of discovery.

Step Three

On the contrary, an attitude of humility means that we have a realistic view of ourselves and our place in the world.

Step Seven

Unity is the spirit that joins thousands of members around the world in a spiritual fellowship that has the power to change lives.

Tradition One

Tradition Eleven is an expression of our faith in the effectiveness of our program.

Tradition Eleven

*Sherman R, New Jersey, USA;
Adrian K, Florida, USA; Steve S, North Carolina, USA;
Karyn W, Missouri, USA; Eric J, Washington DC, USA;
Gary M, California, USA*

WCNA-32 Merchandise Available ONLINE for limited time while supplies last...

Couldn't attend WCNA-32 in Texas, want to purchase additional merchandise or want to buy goodies to give as gifts? Now is the time, and this is the place: <http://www.na.org/wcna32/merchandise.htm>. These items are available in limited quantities and sizes through **March 2008**, or until they are sold out.

Orders will be delivered within a few weeks after the order is received. The orders are processed by us, but sent to you from a fulfillment service. (All sales are final; no refunds or exchanges.)

View and order WCNA-32 merchandise at <http://www.na.org/wcna32/merchandise.htm>.





CALENDAR

NA groups and service bodies can publicize events in *The NA Way Magazine* and in our online calendar at www.na.org. To submit event information for the online calendar and the magazine, just click on the "na events" link at www.na.org and follow the instructions. (If you don't have Internet access, fax your event info to: 818.700.0700, attn: NA Way; or mail it to: *The NA Way Magazine*; Box 9999; Van Nuys, CA 91409 USA.) Only multi-day events are printed in the magazine. Events remain on the online calendar until the week after the event. Please submit information according to the magazine publication schedule below.

Issue	Submit event info by	For events taking place during
January.....	5 October	second week of January through first week of April
April	5 January	second week of April through first week of July
July	5 April	second week of July through first week of October
October	5 July	second week of October through first week of January

Australia

New South Wales 1-3 Feb; Byron Bay Convention; A&I Hall, Byron Bay; write: Box 495, Byron Bay; New South Wales, Australia

Belgium

Brussels 19-20 Jan; De l'hombre a la lumiere (From Shadow to Light); Ecole Altitude Cents, Brussels; event info: 32487942246; www.na.be

Brazil

Ceará 11-13 Apr; Convenção do CSA do Sol 2; SESC IPARANA–Fortaleza–CE, Fortaleza; event info: 85.88668206; www.na.org.br/csadosol/csna

Santa Catarina 11-13 Apr; Convenção Regional Região Brasil Sul 3; Praia dos Ingleses-Hotel Praiatur, Florianópolis; rsvns: 48.3269.1292; www.nabrasilsul.org

Canada

Ontario 15-17 Feb; Toronto Area Convention 5; Crowne Plaza Toronto Don Valley, Toronto; rsvns: 877.474.6835; www.torontona.org

Quebec 29 Feb-2 Mar; Youth Convention 12; Sheraton Hotel Laval, Laval; rsvns: 800.325.3535; event info: 514.608.9489; registration: nicque25@hotmail.com; www.naquebec.org/cjna-ycna

India

Karnataka 28 Feb-1 Mar; Bangalore Area Convention of Narcotics Anonymous 5; Amblee Resorts Royal Retreat, Mysore; event info: 919880198032; registration: 919844562211; www.blacna.org

Indonesia

Bali 30 May-1 Jun; Bali Area Convention 7; Dhyana Pura Hotel, Seminyak; event info: narandy79@yahoo.com, universed@bigfoot.com; www.na-bali.org

Mexico

Baja California 11-13 Apr; Convención de el Area Baja Cachanilla 5; Hotel Calafia, Mexicali; rsvns: US: 877.727.2492, Mexico: 800.02.65.444; event info: 760.251.1496

Peru

Piura 26-27 Jan; Convención de Verano; event info: 51.1.99706609; <http://groups.msn.com/m7o6n2qg00p944ekai1nm08g01>

Philippines

Cebu 1-3 Feb; Pilipinas Regional Convention 13; ECOTECH Center, Cebu City; rsvns: 63.9189379851; event info: 63.9209511494; www.napilipinas.org

Thailand

Bangkok 14-16 Mar; First Thai Regional Convention; Ambassador Hotel, Bangkok; rsvns: 0066.0.2254.0444; event info: 0066.0.87104.4032; www.na-thailand.org

United Kingdom

London 11-13 Apr; London Area Convention 17; Friends Meeting House, London; event info: www.londonna.org; speaker tape info: 07983.669155; speaker tape deadline: 31 Jan; write: LCNA17; UKSO; 202 City Road; London, England EC1V 2PH

United States

Alabama 18-20 Jan; Central Alabama Area Convention 11; Governor's House Hotel and Convention Center, Montgomery; rsvns: 866.535.5392; event info: 334.240.6946; www.alnwflrscna.org

2) 8-10 Feb; Out of the Darkness, Into the Light 12; Holiday Inn, Decatur; rsvns: 256.355.3150; event info: 256.777.0130

3) 14-16 Mar; Greater Mobile Area Convention; Renaissance Riverview Plaza Hotel, Mobile; rsvns: 866.749.6069; event info: 251.370.2536; registration: 251.554.0121

Arkansas 14-17 Mar; Hangin' in the Fort Convention 15; Holiday Inn City Center, Fort Smith; rsvns: 800.465.4329; event info: 479.285.1276

California 11-13 Jan; TAC 8 (formerly TriArea Convention); Konocti Harbor Resort and Spa, Kelseyville; rsvns: 800.279.4281; www.TAC8.homestead.com

2) 18-20 Jan; San Fernando Valley Area Convention; Marriott Burbank Airport Hotel and Convention Center, Burbank; rsvns: 818.843.6000; event info: 818.943.2175; www.todayna.org

3) 15-17 Feb; Central California Regional Convention; Crowne Plaza Seaside Park, Ventura; rsvns: 800.842.0800; event info: 661.709.0917

4) 20-23 Mar; Northern California Convention 30; Sacramento Convention Center, Sacramento; www.norcalna.org/nccna.php

5) 29 Mar-6 Apr; Southern Mexican Riviera Cruise, San Diego; event info: 626.917.0303; www.montrosetravel.com/nacruise

Delaware 28-30 Mar; Small Wonder Area Convention 8; University of Delaware, Newark; event info: 302.438.5676

Florida 17-20 Jan; Palmcoast Spiritual Retreat 19; GoldCoast Christian Camp, Lake Worth; event info: 561.662.9742; www.palmcoastna.org

2) 28-30 Mar; Convención Latina del Sur de la Florida 3; Embassy Suites Hotel, Miami; rsvns: 800.362.2779; event info: 786.266.0834; www.convencionlatina.com/latina.htm

3) 4-6 Apr; Space and Treasure Coast Areas Convention 3; Cocoa Beach Holiday Inn and Resort, Cocoa Beach; rsvns: 321.392.1621; event info: 772.634.6470; treasurecoastareana.com

Georgia 21-24 Feb; Georgia Regional Convention; Marriott Auga Hotel and Suites, Auga; rsvns: 706.722.8900; event info: 478.233.0170; www.grcna.org

Idaho 28-30 Mar; Southern Idaho Regional Convention; Best Western Burley Inn and Convention Center, Burley; rsvns: 208.678.3501; event info: 208.679.1065

Illinois 1-3 Feb; Circle of Sisters 11; Hyatt Regency McCormick Place, Chicago; rsvns: 312.567.1234; info@circleofsisters.org

2) 11-13 Apr; Rock River Area Convention 17; Ramada Inn, South Beloit; rsvns: 815.389.1812; event info: 608.362.5260

Kansas 4-6 Apr; Mid-America Regional Convention; Holiday Inn Holidome, Lawrence; rsvns: 785.841.7077; event info: 620.757.0450

Kentucky 18-20 Jan; Louisville Area Convention 18; Executive West Hotel, Louisville; rsvns: 800.626.2708; event info: 502.648.5759;

Maine 11-13 Apr; Brothers in Spirit Men's Retreat; Notre Dame Spiritual Center, Alfred; event info: www.namaine.org

Maryland 11-13 Apr; Chesapeake-Potomac Regional Convention 22; Ocean City Convention Center, Ocean City; event info: 301.420.4404; www.cprcna.org/22

Massachusetts 18-20 Jan; Boston Area Convention 13; Sheraton Framingham, Framingham; rsvns: 800.325.3535; event info: 617.445.5553

2) 25-26 Jan; Twin Jam 2 Group Anniversary; Holiday Inn Holidome, Holyoke; rsvns: 413.534.1155; event info: 413.626.5198

3) 28-30 Mar; Northeast Massachusetts Area Convention; Boston Marriott Peabody, Peabody; rsvns: 800.228.9290; event info: 781.953.4168

Michigan 20-23 Mar; Detroit Areas Convention 16; Hyatt Regency Dearborn, Dearborn; rsvns: 313.593.1234; event info: 313.421.2312

Minnesota 4-6 Apr; Minnesota Regional Convention 15; Hyatt Regency Hotel, Minneapolis; rsvns: 888.591.1234; event info: www.naminnesota.org

Nebraska 22-24 Feb; Close Encounters of the Clean Kind 21; Crowne Plaza Hotel, Omaha; rsvns: 402.496.0850; event info: 402.320.0948; www.eastern-nebraska-na.org

Nevada 10-13 Jan; Southern Nevada Area Convention 22; Riviera Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas; rsvns: 800.634.6753; event info: 702.630.7149; www.snana.org

2) 7-9 Mar; Las Vegas Dopes on Slopes 4; Chalet Village Condominiums, Brian Head, Utah; rsvns: 800.942.8908; event info: 702.236.4676; www.nxnwana.org

New York 11-13 Jan; Nassau Area Convention 5; Huntington Hilton, Melville-Long Island; rsvns: 631.845.1000; event info: 516.731.6011

2) 15-17 Feb; Convención Hispana de Nueva York 3; Crowne Plaza Hotel, White Plains; rsvns: 914.682.0050; event info: 347.613.3275; www.metroareadehablahispana.com

3) 22-24 Feb; Rochester Area Convention 14; Crowne Plaza Hotel, Rochester; rsvns: 585.546.3450; event info: 585.328.2593; www.rochesterny-na.org

4) 7-9 Mar; First Stop to Freedom; Melville Marriott Long Island, New York; rsvns: 631.423.1600; event info: 917.376.0021; airlines: 646.515.4404; www.westernqueensna.com

5) 21-23 Mar; Bronx Area Convention 6; Rye Town Hilton, Ryebrook; rsvns: 800.445.8667, code: NAB; event info: 917.553.8377; www.bronxna.com/bxacna

North Carolina 22-24 Feb; Freedom by the Sea Convention 7; Sea Trail Resort, Wilmington; rsvns: 800.624.6601; event info: 910.352.6249

Ohio 8-10 Feb; Toledo Area Convention 11; Clarion Westgate Center, Toledo; rsvns: 419.535.7070; event info: 419.531.2047

2) 29 Feb-2 Mar; Cleveland Area Convention 5; Hilton Hotel Cleveland East Beachwood, Cleveland; rsvns: 800.817.5154; event info: 216.338.7545

Pennsylvania 8-10 Feb; Mid Atlantic Regional Learning Conference; Lancaster Host, Lancaster; rsvns: 717.299.5500; event info: 717.330.3037

2) 21-23 Mar; Greater Philadelphia Regional Convention 23; Radisson Inn, King of Prussia/ Valley Forge; rsvns: 610.337.2000; event info: 267.973.3495

Rhode Island 21-23 Mar; Greater Providence Area Convention 5; Providence Biltmore, Providence; rsvns: 800.294.7709; event info: 401.345.5776

South Carolina 18-20 Jan; Upper South Carolina Area Convention 28; Embassy Suites Golf Resort and Conference Center, Greenville; rsvns: 864.676.9090; event info: 864.593.8337

2) 15-17 Feb; Recovery at Work; Hilton Ocean Front Resort, Hilton Head Island; rsvns: 843.842.8000; event info: 803.467.8399

Texas 18-20 Jan; Tejas Bluebonnet Regional Convention; Westin Oaks, Houston; rsvns: 713.960.8100; event info: www.tejas-na.org

2) 15-17 Feb; Texas Unity Convention 98; Redwood Lodge, Whitney; rsvns: 254.694.3412; event info: 832.704.0687; www.tucna.org

3) 13-16 Mar; Rio Grande Regional Convention 19; Wyndham Hotel, El Paso; rsvns: 800.996.3426; event info: 313.447.8393; www.riograndena.org

4) 20-23 Mar; Lone Star Regional Convention; Hilton DFW Lakes Executive Conference Center, Grapevine; rsvns: 800.445.8667; event info: 214.437.7875; www.lsrna.org

Utah 7-9 Mar; Fourth Annual Las Vegas Dopes on Slopes; Chalet Village Condominiums, Brian Head; rsvns: 800.942.8908; event info: 702.236.4676; www.nxnwana.org

Virginia 11-13 Jan; Virginia Regional Convention 26; Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center, Roanoke; rsvns: 540.985.5900; event info: www.avcna.org

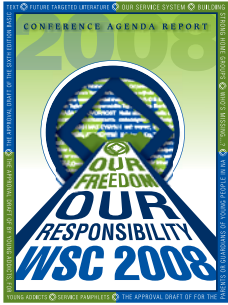
2) 29 Feb-2 Mar; Tidewater Area Convention 8; Norfolk Marriott Waterside, Norfolk; rsvns: 888.236.2427; event info: 757.714.1554

Wisconsin 15-17 Feb; Greater Milwaukee Unity Convention; Radisson Milwaukee Airport, Milwaukee; rsvns: 888.201.1718; event info: 414.397.3084

*All best friends started
out as perfect strangers.*

Tommi C, Pennsylvania, USA

WSO PRODUCT UPDATE



Conference Agenda Report

Download or order your copy of the CAR, or sign up to receive copies of the approval draft literature at www.na.org/conference/index.htm. You can also download and respond to the discussion questionnaires included in the CAR.

Medallion survey

Arabic Numerals



Bronze Finish

Silver-Nickel Finish

Roman Numerals



Bronze Finish

Silver-Nickel Finish

In response to requests we have received regarding the medallion design, we are conducting a web survey to gather fellowship preference. The medallion design choices are between Arabic or Roman numerals and bronze or silver-nickel finishes. Above are the two medallion numbering and finish choices. On the survey page, www.na.org/catalog/med-choice.htm, you can choose any combination of numbering and finish.

Just for Today electronic subscription

We are pleased to announce that a daily email service for *Just for Today, Daily Meditations for Recovering Addicts* is now available from NA World Services.

To sign-up go to:

www.jftna.org/cgi-bin/dada/mail.cgi

or to view the daily meditations go to

<http://www.jftna.org/jft/index.php>

NA literature online

The recovery literature webpage has been updated to include newly published languages: Afrikaans, Filipino, Indonesian, and Thai.

This and other NA literature is available at <http://www.na.org/ips/>

To be discontinued

Production of the items below will be discontinued when inventory has been depleted.

Gold-plated medallions
(item #7300 through 7399)

Small and large PI posters
(item #9108 and 9109)

Individual recovery tapes
(item #8802 through 8806)

Coming soon

English

NA White Booklet – ASL DVD

Item No. 1500-ASL Price US \$0.63

French

Just for Today, Revised

Juste pour aujourd'hui, révisé

Item No. FR-1112 Price US \$7.70

Portuguese

The NA Step Working Guides

Guia para Trabalhar os Passos de Narcóticos Anónimos

Item No. PO-1400 Price US \$7.30

Russian

Just for Today

Только сегодня

Item No. RU-1112 Price US \$7.70

Turkish

Basic Text

Adsız Narkotik

Item No. TU-1101 Price US \$5.50



Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

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Extent and nature of circulation	Average No. of copies in preceding 12 months	Actual No. copies as of 1-Oct-07
Total printed copies	37,250	38,000
Requested subscription—outside county	36,769	37,227
Requested subscription —in-county	0	0
Total requested subscription	36,769	37,227
Total free or nominal rate distribution	145	92
Total distribution	36,914	37,319
Copies not distributed (office uses)	336	681
Total	37,250	38,000
Percent requested circulation	99.6%	99.75%

Certified, correct, complete

Home GROUP

IT'S IMPORTANT TO
ACKNOWLEDGE CLEANTIME,
BUT MANY OTHER
RECOVERY MILESTONES
COULD ALSO
BE RECOGNIZED:

