

# CARRYING THE MESSAGE

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LOUISVILLE AREA NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS NEWSLETTER

Email subscription: send your email address to  
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## Topic of The Month: New Beginnings

### Service Begins With Me

Service, an important aspect of my recovery, begins with me – my willingness, my commitment, and my desire to stay clean.

Many times I have heard our trusted servants whine and complain that there is a lack of addicts willing to serve, then try to manipulate others into serving. True, there is a lack of addicts who are willing to commit and serve in our fellowship, but...

I believe we need to make service *attractive*.

Whining, complaining, shaming, and manipulating are not very attractive to most people – myself included. We need to talk positively about our service experiences to let addicts know of the opportunities for growth and recovery that exist within service. Why not politely invite a sponsee, a friend, or the person sitting next to us at our home group to attend the next group conscience/business meeting, or an area subcommittee meeting, or the area service committee meeting?

I have had the opportunity to work with addicts at every level of NA's service structure: group, area, region, zone, and world. The experience, knowledge, and spiritual growth I have received from this involvement have been immeasurable in my recovery. But you do not need to start off as cofacilitator of the World Service Conference to receive these benefits; just start, as I did, at your home group.

My involvement with my home group gave me (and still gives me) the opportunity to meet new people and really feel a part of Narcotics Anonymous, as does my work at all service levels. In addition, I have learned to work with others, discovered some of my abilities and talents (one being the ability to "disagree without being disagreeable"), improved my self-esteem, become aware that I did not need to be right or have my way all the time, and developed some very strong, loving relationships.

I suggest that recovering addicts get involved in service. Anyone can attend a group conscience/business or subcommittee meeting and anyone can receive the benefits and personal growth that come with giving away what was so freely given.

I have heard it said that service is gratitude in action. So please show your gratitude today.

***A grateful addict in service,  
Mike B, Manitoba, Canada***

(reprinted from the October 2004  
Issue of The NA Way)

*"There is no model of the recovering addict. When the drugs go and the addict works the program, wonderful things happen. Lost dreams awaken and new possibilities arise."*

- Basic Text, pg. 88

Every morning when I wake up I pray to thank God for waking me up clean and alive. I pray for the willingness to do what needs to be done throughout the day and for freedom from obsession, compulsion, and my total self-centeredness. I say the Third Step prayer and I call my sponsor and we read the morning meditation. I do all these things in order to stay reliant on a power greater than myself and to help give me the strength I need.

I've been through relapse twice in this process. The first time, I used thinking I could control my using. The second time, I used because I used a medical surgery as an excuse to take pain medication as *I wanted to*. God had enough Mercy to allow me to live through my last time using, and my clean date is now January 26, 2004. When I got back, my sponsor asked me what I was going to do different. I didn't really know then, but I did know that using was not an option any longer. I suffer from HIV as well as the disease of addiction and my last run took me down in weight. It was nothing but God that kept me from advancing from HIV to AIDS.

I went to meetings every day. I had withdrawal from the dope. I prayed everyday for God to give me strength, and He did! I started back on the Steps and started paying my home group back the money I had stolen from them during active addiction. Then I learned that the Louisville Area had a newsletter and that they needed help. With some gentle guidance from my sponsor, I started to show up at Newsletter meetings and soon, I got a service position. Then I stepped up and started to help put the Newsletter together on my computer, and working closely with another addict, we collaborate every month to get the version that you read completed.

With some more encouragement and after bringing up the issue with my sponsor, I enrolled back into college. I applied for financial aide, and I got it. I started slowly with just two classes, I applied myself, and I passed both of them. Also, due to some help at school, I got a good part-time job that will help me through school. All this is due to a loving and caring God, and people in NA that love me and care about me, and a supportive sponsor who believed in me even when I didn't believe in myself. It's true what the literature says: lost dreams do awaken and new possibilities arise.

- In Loving Service  
David M.

# Creative Writing

As I thought of my friend, I didn't know where he started or where I ended. Little did I realize its called co-dependency. I somehow believed it was some sort of spell. As long as he was happy, it made me feel so swell. It took all these years to face up to this fear: that I might fall if he wasn't near, trying to fulfill something not quite real with unrealistic obsessive zeal. Could he have known and refused to share or did I really know and pretend that the signs weren't there, wanting so much to meet his approval? Fearing constantly of attempted removal caused an empty moodiness like a nasty germ longing painfully to be confirmed. Why did it happen? Maybe I'll never know, but in order to heal, I must let go. The empty void wasn't put there for me, but for my Higher Power full of Grace and Mercy. I love the man without a doubt. Rarely is he impatient with me and my selfish pouts. He diverted me ever so gently and lovingly told me victory comes after surrender. And the care of a loving and caring God can lead us to sane behavior. How can I ever thank you for helping me to see? You guided me into these rooms where you and others are telling me my recovery is my responsibility, one day at a time, and for my new relationship behavior. Praise God for having you lead me to surrender to [the God of my Understanding] with an attitude of gratitude.

- Anonymous

## Gratitude

My first thought regarding gratitude is this: gratitude is a lifestyle, not a particular set of actions.

But...a person can't think his/her way into a new way of living. We must live our way into a new way of thinking. Hence, being involved in specific, purposeful activities and actions that help us both feel and exhibit gratitude are important. For me, as a recovering addict, I need to be vigilant to stay involved in such activities and actions.

Examples of such activities and actions are volunteer service, lovingly donating resources, daily positive affirmations, taking myself less seriously by looking for humor in all things, writing about my blessings, and thanking God for my blessings. Those are just off the top of my head.

Personally, the Twelfth Step is like the starting gun at a horse race. The racetrack is life itself. The starting gate I'm being released from is the fear and imprisonment of my disease. Except, of course, in this race there is no competition!

But once that gun fires and the starter's gate is open, I'm thrust out onto the track. What am I going to do? Free will is both terrifying and absolutely, mind-blowingly wonderful!

Sometimes I wish there really were more rules – life would feel "safer," more "under control." But that's not the way God made it (thank God!) If you are not yet thrilled, to the point of getting excited on many mornings, by the gift of your free will – keep coming back!

- Greg K.

## Hope

dances as you run

just away from fingertips

sit and its right there

- Tom E.

## Someone New

The loudly wisp so the lights couldn't dim.

That breeze with no sight of wind.

All the lines the colors shown through.

When you fell up in the hall.

Being there when we wanted to fall.

When you began to show me what is true.

It was all for you.

For all, the times, we fought.

Right or wrong and not.

Acknowledged all the foolish dreams we had.

We crossed the lines.

That would have made you mad.

The words the thoughts.

The migrating flocks.

The need to know.

Was all we had.

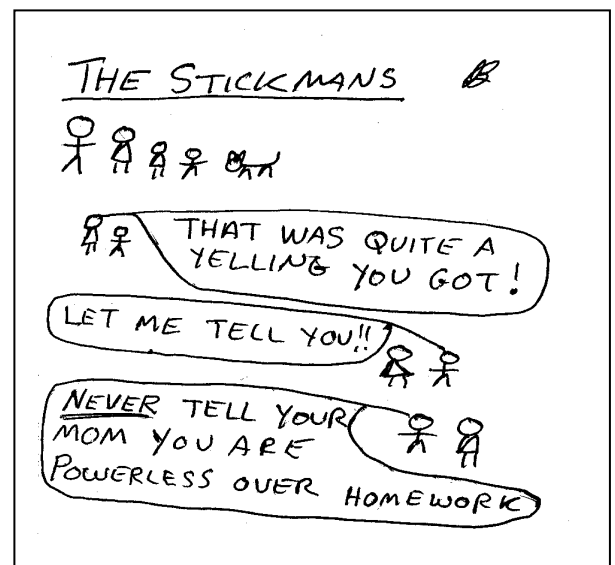
It was all for you.

Forgot that all for you.

Someone new.

It was.

- Nathan R.





# CARRYING THE MESSAGE

## LOUISVILLE AREA NEWSLETTER SUBCOMMITTEE

### CONTACT US:

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#### SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS

WE NEED YOUR HELP!!  
1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays 6pm  
West End Baptist Church  
4<sup>th</sup> St. and Magnolia Ave.

#### EMAIL

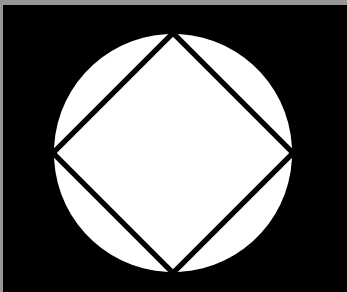
newsletter@nalouisville.org

#### ASC MEETING

The First Sunday of Every Month  
at St. Ann's, 3pm  
1511 Algonquin Pkwy.

#### **We're on the Web!**

See us at:  
[www.nalouisville.org](http://www.nalouisville.org)



Louisville Area NA Helpline  
502-499-4423

## ANNIVERSARIES

If you would like your anniversary listed here:

- Contact us by phone
  - Contact us by email
  - Submit by GSR at ASC Meeting
  - Submit by home group report at ASC
- We list this month's anniversaries as well as the first half of the next month's. We apologize for any anniversaries that we skip, forget, or misprint!

Mike S.	January 1	10 years	Another Chance Group
Mary G.	January 2	2 years	Take It EZ
Stephanie A.	January 4	16 years	Unity of Hope
Katie D.	January 5	1 year	Sweet Surrender
Shavon	January 6	1 year	A Vision of Hope
Kat A.	January 11	3 years	Sweet Surrender
Bryan B.	January 12	1 year	Keep It Real Group
Annisha H.	January 13	4 years	A Vision of Hope
Brian B.	January 17	1 year	Just For Today Group
Alyce T.	January 21	6 years	The Stopping Point
Terri O.	January 24	17 years	Just For Today Group
Lonnie M.	January 24	19 years	Just For Today Group
Robin H.	January 25	9 years	Sweet Surrender
Kristie	January 26	1 year	Escape From Denial
Mavis H.	January 29	1 year	Reach For Recovery
Rick	January 29	1 year	Saturday Night Live
Beverly F.	January 30	1 year	Take It EZ
Brenda E.	February 1	17 years	Sweet Surrender
David M.	February 2	1 year	Escape From Denial
David McL.	February 10	9 years	Cool Changes
James W.	February 15	3 years	Take It EZ

The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent, and should not be attributed to, the Newsletter Subcommittee or Narcotics Anonymous as a whole.