

CARRYING THE MESSAGE

March 2004

Volume 1, Issue 3

LOUISVILLE AREA NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS NEWSLETTER SUBCOMMITTEE

March Topic of the Month: How Important is the Atmosphere of Recovery in NA Meetings?

Since my introduction to the program of Narcotics Anonymous and the recovery process, atmosphere at a meeting has been one of the top things I look for in a meeting. Now, good recovery and good amounts of clean time are also factors, but a loving and fun atmosphere will keep me coming back to those meetings on a regular basis. My homegroup for example, is a wide array of clean time and people from throughout the area. We have very good times together and try to pass that along to those who attend from other meetings.

In my case though, I drive almost an hour to get to meetings and a good atmosphere of recovery and not disease is a major decision for myself. When I have driven that length of time with the disease that's in my head, a good clear message of NA recovery is what I need. I love to hear people talk about the joys and the troubles of recovery, and how they live the NA way of life. When it is discussed about cross addiction, I feel like the newcomer or those who are having trouble that night get the message of the 1st step misconstrued and can leave them just as confused as when they got here. (I know, that's kind of what happened to me early in recovery.) I try to share my experience, strength, and hope (sometimes funny, sometimes not) in a clear NA way. I remember not being able to laugh when I first got clean and being able to laugh during meetings when someone says something funny, is a Godsend to me.

In the time I have been clean, I have been to many meetings and driven many clean miles on my vehicle. My hope is to continue to bring my good sense of humor and friendly smile to many more meetings. This has been my way of bringing a good atmosphere of recovery to the meetings I attend, and hopefully through the steps, the fellowship, and this program I can continue to grow in a good recovery atmosphere.

- an anonymous member.

Pet peeve. Someone shares at a meeting. The next person who shares critiques the previous sharing, going over point by point what was wrong with the previous sharing. This macho posturing and one-up-manship never feels like it was done with love or even with concern for the newcomer. It always seems like angry know it alls are having a bad day and an N.A. meeting is a safe place to dump your anger on an innocent bystander. This to me is not an atmosphere of recovery.

-Love and peace, David V.

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.

Experience, Strength, and Hope on Step Three and Tradition Three



TRADITION THREE: The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.

The only requirement is a desire to stop using. Thank God! I'm so grateful this is the only requirement for membership in NA. If we had to sign contracts or promise to never use again the rooms of NA might be empty. Any type of commitment in my first 90 days may have sent me running back to using and my old ways. I have been told by many addicts that there is no shame in relapse, the shame comes in staying out there knowing there's another way to live. This is where the 3rd tradition comes into my life. Various obsessions, using thoughts, relapse, and unmanageability all happen in our lives and during the process of recovery. With these things we aren't banned or kicked out of NA, because the only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using.

- Jenny P.

This means that any addict regardless of preference or disease can stop using and is welcome in NA. That choice is up to the individual freely. Hoping they see what we have and become willing to get it, that any addict with the desire to stop using can get this new way of life and become a member of NA. The Third Tradition helps NA offer recovery to all addicts by freeing us from making judgements and looking down on other members. The desire is in the heart of each individual to help and welcome others. It changes our attitude and acceptance with unconditional love, in order to carry the message of the Third Tradition. Tolerance and anonymity are the keys that support our groups and freedom to welcome everyone as equal. The common denominator in NA is the disease of addiction. The practice of anonymity reassures us the integrity of Tradition Three. In other words, no member or group is more important than the message we carry. The message is any addict who has the desire to stop using, need not die without having a chance to recover.

STEP THREE: We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

"Take my will and my life, guide me in my recovery, show me how to live"
- Third Step Prayer

for so long
felt apart from
punished myself
isolating, using more
believed the lie...
was big enough
to handle it
on my own
then
made a decision
willing to trust in
power greater than
blessed with the miracle
beginning a new life
with my Higher Power
inviting me along
for the ride

- Mike S.

Dear Friends and Family in N. A.,

I wanted to write and try to reach as many people as possible. I'm excited about this newsletter and thought it would be the best conduit. As many of you know, on January 30, 2004, I was in a freak sledding accident at Crescent Hill Golf Course. I was taken from the golf course to Suburban Hospital that morning, and four days later, told that I had crushed the third lumbar vertebrae in my back. This is a compression fracture with major spinal nerves compressed between the vertebrae and a large bone fragment was lodged on the left side of my spinal cord. I was within a millimeter of becoming paralyzed from the waist down.

On the fifth day they did an anterior approach operation to remove the bone fragment and stabilize the spine with a metal plate and a bone graft. The operation was successful, but complicated by tremendous blood loss and they were unable to complete the surgery. After the first surgery, I developed an infection and was informed that I couldn't see my children until the infection had cleared. The devastation and depression that I felt halted my physical as well as my mental and spiritual recovery. It took ten days. Two weeks after the first surgery, they performed the second, posterior entrance surgery and fused my second, third and fourth vertebrae with rods and screws. Five days after the second operation, I was allowed to see my children again.

Even though I was structurally capable of standing and walking, I was unable to do so without passing out. On the fifth day after the surgery, a blood transfusion enabled me to stand and walk. Almost four weeks after the accident on my first walk in the hospital, I saw the sky for the first time.

During my four-week stay in Norton's Hospital, many of you came to see me and support me, many of you called me and talked me through the pain and the fear. I believe that were it not for the unconditional support and love of my N. A. family and especially my home group and my sponsor, I would not have been able to make it through the hurdles and barriers of my surgical recovery. I was in too much pain and on too many painkillers to reach God on my own. The only way that I was able to reach God was through all of you and that's how God reached me. On many sleepless nights, your willingness to take my phone calls helped me make it one more day. Your cards and letters and flowers were constant reminders of the miracle of unity and faith. Support and love came from the most unexpected people and meant that much more. When I think of the help and support I received during what is surely the most difficult time of my life, I am overwhelmed with gratitude and amazement. I am amazed that people were so selflessly willing to help me and my family. Your prayers were there when I couldn't pray for myself. I hope that when given the opportunity, I can follow the example you have all given me by loving and helping someone else in need.

With love and faith,
Leigh K.

We have come together, because there is no easy way, and because we are searching, step by step, for a way and a language. A way to see ourselves clearly and a language in which to give and receive the love that is somewhere hidden in each of us. The most pitiful thing in the world is a man who thinks he has nothing more to learn. He is dead. Although there is not a man exempt from guilt and dishonesty, there are some who love their guilt and dishonesty. This house is only a brief shelter along the way. My brothers and sisters can extend only a hand, and I am only a possibility. As long as I have a choice I am responsible. As long as I only wait for something to happen, time will be a thief and hope will be a crook. There is only one kind of magic, and that is: DOING.

ANNIVERSARIES

Mischelle M.	March 1	1 year	Serenity Group
Kevin M.	March 1	9 years	Dope Or Us
Judy T.	March 2	11 years	Serenity Group
Steve R.	March 3	19 years	How it Works
Marion C.	March 3	6 years	Unity of Hope
Kathy S.	March 6	3 years	Lose the Desire
Albrea V.	March 6	10 years	Saturday Night Live
Ava	March 8	3 years	Why Are We Here
Glen W.	March 9	3 years	We Too Recover
Bob M.	March 10	1 year	How it Works
Chris D.	March 11	3 years	Enough is Enough
Monica M.	March 13	12 years	Saturday Night Live
Greg G.	March 14	10 years	Walkin' and Talkin'
Mark A.	March 15	1 year	Stick and Stay Basic
Steve K.	March 15	1 year	Stick and Stay Basic
Bernard P.	March 15	5 years	Restored to Sanity
Keith S.	March 22	5 years	Serenity Group
John B.	March 26	14 years	Highland Peace
Tim N.	March 29	2 years	Stick and Stay Basic
Charlie C.	March 29	14 years	Stick and Stay Basic
Bernie N.	April 2	1 year	Caring Thru Sharing
Semiko	April 3	1 year	Lose the Desire

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LOUISVILLE AREA NEWSLETTER SUBCOMMITTEE

CONTACT US:

SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS

1st and 3rd Mondays 6pm
West End Baptist Church
4th St. and Magnolia Ave.

EMAIL

newsletter@nalouisville.org

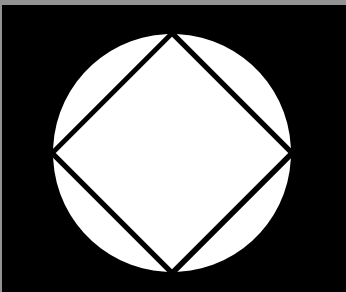
PHONE/ IN PERSON

Imani B.
Kristin F.

502-891-0704

We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.nalouisville.org



NOW ACCEPTING SUBMISSIONS FOR APRIL

TOPIC OF THE MONTH:

What part do I play in the Unity that the First Tradition calls for?

EXPERIENCE STRENGTH AND HOPE

On Step Four and Tradition Four

ANY QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, OR CONCERNS ABOUT RECOVERY

STORIES, ARTWORK, OR IDEAS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE!

SUGGESTIONS FOR OUR NEWSLETTER

Submissions should be approx. 100 words and should be sent in by **Mar. 26**.

Exceptions can be made, just contact us! You can email submissions to newsletter@nalouisville.org or call and we will make arrangements to pick it up!

NA FUNCTIONS

SATURDAY, MARCH. 13

6-10pm
Walnut Street Baptist Church
Activities Center
220 W. St. Catherine St.
Louisville, KY

LACNA XV CABIN FEVER FAMILY FUN DAY

Bowling, Skating, Volleyball, Racket Ball, Basketball,
Pool Tables, Ping Pong, Air Hockey, Etc.
\$5 per person/ \$20.00 per family (4 or more)
Food and Drinks Can be Purchased
For info contact Annisha H. (502)417-6553

Weekend of April 24-25

Freedom Retreat
Casey Co. Kentucky

KHANA FUNDRAISER FOR BARCNA 1

Campout, Beast Roast, Bonfire, Speakers, Auction
50/50 Raffle, Open Discussion Meetings
2 Primitive Cabins, Bring Tents
\$10 per person/ \$15 per couple includes site and meal
\$5 per person/ \$8 per couple for Saturday Night meal only
contact Drew C. (270)692-5721 home (270)402-1346 cell
or Becky B. (270)403-2047 draco@kih.net

NA CONVENTION CALENDAR

March 12-14

TACNA IV

Cavalier Hotel Virginia Beach, Virginia
contact Allison L. (757)686-5525

April 2-4

RRCNA XIII

Ramada Inn South Beloit, Illinois
contact (815)389-3481

April 8-11

DACNA XII

Renaissance Center Marriott Detroit, Michigan
contact Carmen J. (313)865-5203

April 8-11

LSRCNA XIX

The Westin Dallas, Texas