



Mid America Newsletter



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“What is our message? The message is that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live.”

Pg. 65, 5th edition, Basic Text

Note: the opinions and views shared in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of The M.A.N. staff, or NA as a whole.



And here we are, another issue, another year, and if you are reading this at M.A.R.C.N.A., another convention. My gratitude and thanks go out to convention committee for allowing me to add this issue to the registration packets again this year. For those that read this every quarter, you are constantly seeing changes with the cover logo and with this issue a change in layout. It's not that I'm never satisfied, but I do feel change is good and it also makes it easy to identify the most current issue. Of course the real reason is the font I used on the last issue disappeared from my list of available fonts so I found something else instead of trying to fix the blurb in the system. Anyway, I hope you like it! Some items that were left out of this issue was the "Around the Region" section and the customary flyer that sports the inside back cover. This issue would of had the upcoming Mid-America Region longest running free campout in the world, the 4th of July campout! Unfortunately I haven't seen the flyer yet but I do know it is being held at Pamona Lake - Wolfe Creek Pass again this year. The dates are June 30th through July 3rd, 2006 and the theme is "Living in Recovery Is Believing In Recovery". I also know there are very

cool tank tops for sale sporting the theme and design. As always, I hope to see everybody there. What did get put into this issue that caused some of the rearranging is a survey that our regional Outreach and P.I. subcommittees are presenting. If you are at the convention, please fill one out there and proudly where the cool sticker, if not please fill one out and give to your group's GSR or area's RCM before the next regional meeting in May. Page 10 has the information on that meeting with dates. Remember, only fill one out! This survey will be compiled and the information will make up a pamphlet which can be used for presentations to the public about our local fellowship. As with all service positions in Narcotics Anonymous, my term as Editor is coming to an end with this issue. I do have the option to run a second term (2 years). More will be revealed at the May RSC. If a new Editor is elected, I want to thank everyone who supported and contributed to this publication the past 2 years, it is your newsletter and I feel you have made it a very good one! Please make sure this issue gets out to the fellowship. The standard method of issueing packets to each area has it's limitations, so please help make sure all groups get some of these. Now read on!

Editor

To Judge or Not to Judge

How much damage do we do when we judge another? So often I hear addicts judge, condemn and criticize each other. I, myself, have been guilty of it. I have seen it done in many ways: the disapproving look, the open statement in a meeting, the snide sarcastic comment to our friends outside smoking, at coffee later on and, my personal favorite, in the local, area or even regional business meetings, where we annihilate individuals/behaviors as a group. It is like at some point we have appointed ourselves as judges, juries and grand authorities on how we should, act, speak, dress and/or believe. It is ironic to me because the program of Narcotics Anonymous, that we all hold sacred, is based on unconditional love and acceptance. And it is not like any one of us got here because we have done everything right in our lives. At Soul to Soul this year after a wonderful, spiritually fulfilling weekend, a discussion broke out about what to do with the leftover food. In years past, the leftover food has gone to people who needed it, for the most part. This year, there was much controversy and discussion about being 'self supporting' etc. There was judgment running amuck among some members. I watched during the course of discussion those who would have benefited from having some of the extra food withdrawn from the group and have their pride trampled on, leaving without saying a word. The last Regional meeting, there was a very heated discussion about '13th stepping' and 'predatory behavior'. Almost everyone had an opinion about this issue. One of the gentlemen that spoke very adamantly about how we need to 'confront' that type of behavior later came on to me in the lobby. What is it that makes us act this way? I have seen people stop coming to meetings for years over stupid, petty garbage. My sponsor told me that we don't give advice, we

share experience. **She has never once told me what to do or how to do it.** When I was dressing and acting like a ho' she said to me "Amy, you can do whatever you want as long as you are willing to deal with the consequences." And "when I used to do that, this is what happened...this is how I changed it..." I have talked to other women who have been told, "You're acting like a whore and if you don't cut it out you are fired as my sponsee!" EEK!!! There is some unconditional love and acceptance for ya'... I was taught that true *spiritual principles* are **NEVER** in conflict. I was also taught that if I am not coming from a place of love to keep my mouth shut! There are lots of times I want to tell people what *I think*; however, is it to help them or make me feel holier than thou? I always have to check my motives. Most times, when people get on my last nerve and I want to 'call out their behavior,' it is because they are acting on one of my less than endearing traits. Or, flat out, I am jealous for whatever reason. I have also been taught that I can't change other people (one of my most painful lessons that I still struggle with). Having said that, all I have to share is my honest experience, strength and hope; which, for me, means if I haven't done it...I am not going to suggest that you do! I don't fire my sponsees because I don't like how they are acting. The Basic Text tells me that it is an **HONOR** to sponsor others. God knows, if my sponsor would have fired me when she didn't like my behavior I would have been gone long ago, because my behavior sucked!!! Sometimes today, at thirteen years clean, it still does! I am not perfect. Not even close. I have come to understand in my journey of recovery that everyone has to go through everything they have to go through to get where they are going. It is not my **RIGHT** or **RESPONSIBILITY** to interfere with anyone else's path. It is not for me to issue ultimatums or anything else. My sponsor told me that if it is not in the Basic Text it is not

Narcotics Anonymous, but rather personal opinion. The traditions are very clear about where personal opinions can lead us. I have never read in the Basic Text anything about '13th steppin' or 'predatory behavior'. THANK GOD! Guess what!?! Addicts are attracted to each other. Like magnets. Or as my sponsor once said to me, 'Addicts don't fall in love they come in heat'. There is not a damn thing I can do about that. Nor is it any of my business. Fact of the matter is, I was hit on plenty as a young (got here when I was 14) female in the fellowship. I invited it...provoked it...and dressed in a way that would GUARANTEE it! However, I didn't need anyone fighting a battle for me. I got a sponsor...my sponsor told me her experience on how she dealt with it. She taught me how to live my life and figure out what my boundaries were. She also taught me about choices, consequences and being responsible for my actions. I have learned something from everything that has happened to me in the fellowship. Clean time...truly...does not equal quality of recovery. I married a man I started dating when he had nine months clean and I had twelve years, should I be kicked out? We don't all want the same things in life and that is okay! Some people don't want to work a step or grow spiritually. Fine. That is their right. I have a right to choose who I want to be like and who I don't. My sponsor has always taught me that it is okay to take another's inventory. The thing is, I take it **to my sponsor and no one else**. It is not the topic of public forum. This is how I decide what behaviors others have that I like and what ones I want to discard. I don't know. It has been interesting journey, one where I have found that unconditional love and acceptance speak to our primary purpose more than judgment and condemnation ever will. I find it best to be gentle and loving with my fellows rather than critical or hateful. So if you hear me saying something to someone that doesn't sound like it comes from a place

of love, please tell me to keep my mouth shut, because I was given a life due to the unconditional love of others in the fellowship. I seek to give back what was so freely given to me...and that was freedom from active addiction. I love ya' all and I hope we all Keep Coming Back!

Amy H
Emporia



Service Corner

Have you got your votes in? The World Service Conference is right around the corner and even though there are only three motions, all from regions, you still have a voice. The main focus is the issues faced by the fellowship and solutions that have presented themselves by the over abundance of workshops worldwide. I've heard it said by members who are fairly new to this level of service that the conference is trying to get to a more consensus based setting. During my term as RSR/RD ('95-'99), we were saying the same thing. The only difference is, the amount of changes that did take place. A new structure was put into place, along with disbanding several committees and introducing two, cutting the actual meetings in half, funding all regions to attend, and yes, creating an atmosphere where you can sit back, breathe, and bounce ideas off each other. The only resolution that wasn't dealt with on the floor of the conference has, in fact, evolved into action. Of course the many North American Regions that continue to be seated missed that part. T.S.

I had a using dream last night. It has really bothered me today. The dream felt so real and was so vivid. I haven't had a using dream since I had 3 yrs clean. When I awoke this morning, for a few moments I thought it had actually happened, and I felt horrible, almost sick to my stomach. And then I realized that it was only a dream, but it still bothered me off and on today. I know that I am not immune to these kinds of things, but I have over 15yrs clean, I never thought that I would have such a harsh using dream, so vivid and clear that I felt guilty and almost sick from shame when I woke up. Addiction really sucks. While I was at work I started thinking about this poem that I started writing when I only had a couple of years clean. I finished it today. Here's my poem.....

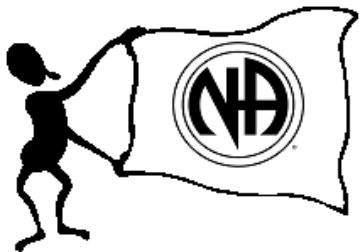
*The ghost of the "me" that I used to be
*Comes back sometimes to haunt me
*I think of me then and I think of me now
*And I think of the road I had to go down
*The drinkin' and usin', myself I was abusin'
*All aspects of addiction running wild
*Messin' up and doing time, feeling like a broken child
*The pain and the fears, the tears and the sorrow
*All led me to NA and a brighter tomorrow
*So come on ghost and bring up my worst
*With the Steps and recovery I am no longer cursed

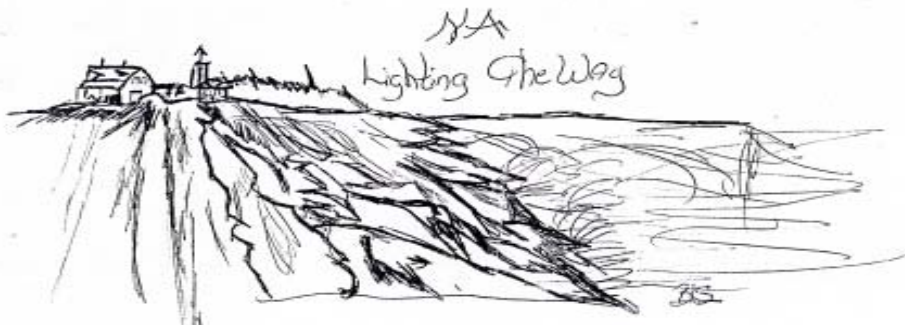
*I am an addict,
my name is Valerie*

"The Gift"

Spiritually, physically, and mentally beaten down, I shamefully went back to a place I had previously found. Too exhausted to fight, too scared to die, I decided, I'd better give this "Program" a real try. Seeing some of the faces I'd seen there before, They warmly greeted me as I came through the door. I felt like a child, lost in a cold rain, My spirit, drowning and dying with pain. Before I had thought I had known it all, So I figured I'd better sit down and shut up, not willing again to fall. Listening and watching each person around the room, I saw glimpses of hope, through the feelings of doom. Things I'd heard, made some mystical sort of sense, Each time I came back, feeling less and less tense. I can remember choking with thoughts in my mind, But they were there to help me, with some sanity to find. Waiting for someone to prove me wrong, They wanted nothing but to love me, like I'd needed for so long. I found a sponsor and started working the steps, Studying and listening to ideas and concepts. What I needed I've found was there all along, My Higher Power was the only one, who needed to be strong. Humbling myself, realizing, I'm not the one, My life became serene, and I have lots of fun. I have a very long time, like the rest of my life, to learn to live. That's the Hope recovery can give!

*Cindy W.
G.O.L. N.A.
2/10/1999*





There's a lighthouse on the hillside that overlooks life's sea,
When I'm tossed it sends out light that I might see,
And the light that shines in darkness now will safely lead me home,
If it wasn't for the lighthouse my ship would sail no more,
And I thank God for the lighthouse; I owe my life to Him,
N.A. is the lighthouse and from the rocks of sin,
It has shown the light around me so that I might clearly see
If it wasn't for that lighthouse, where would this ship be?

Becky S.

2005



I'm an addict, my name is Lorne

I'm originally from San Diego, CA. and I live in Independence, KS. Just like reading "Who's An Addict", my whole life and thinking was centered in drugs in one form or another, the getting and using and finding ways and means to get more. I used to live and lived to use. My drug of choice was meth. but it didn't matter, anything to make me not feel. I started using to be cool, but my disease took over very fast. I wanted to quit for a long time but didn't know how. I thought that if I moved to another state I could start over. So I did, I moved to Kansas. This worked for about a month, but my disease was calling and I thought that if I only drank I would be OK, so I did. It didn't take long for me to be right back with a needle in my arm. I thought that getting married would keep me from using, WRONG...it didn't work. I thought having kids or getting a great job would work and they didn't. It wasn't until in desperation I sought help from N.A. I stayed clean the first time for 22 months till I got involved in my church and quit going to meetings and started using again. Several years later, about to lose everything, I went to treatment. When I got out, I knew I needed to do something different so I got involved in service, started calling people and my sponsor regularly. I got involved in the area business meetings. Today I'm the Just For Today Area H.&I. Chair and we take meetings into several facilities, and have been clean for four years. Thanks again N.A. for showing me a new way to live!

I would like to share something today. Last month while sitting in an update class for my job, I was having trouble breathing and chest pain. Being the stubborn person that I am, I waited until my class was over to go to the hospital. I was given a chest x-ray and was given prescriptions. I followed up with a doctor and found out that I had an abnormal x-ray. I have since had to endure a numerous tests to find out that I have some damage to my heart and a thing called "blebs" that are the size of oranges in my lungs. Let me tell you, I was pretty scared, but a part of me had accepted that whatever my Higher Power had in store for me at that time was what I had to learn at that time.

While sitting in the exam room waiting for the results of my last test, I began to worry. I was in there and alone, unsure and fearful of the possibility of surgery and not being able to work. I was the only person working in my household at that time. I had one single prayer at that moment, that I remain clean for that day regardless of the outcome. While waiting for what seemed forever, I took a deep breath and said my "thank you". I could hear the radio at the nurse's station outside the exam room. A song which means so much to many of us addicts came on. The song called, "Lean on me". When I heard that, I knew my Higher Power had answered a prayer for me. Not only did I realize that I would be okay, but I remembered that my Higher Power was there with me and that I was not alone. I let go of that gripping fear and waited for the doctor to come in. He informed me that I do have some damage to my heart and lungs, but will not require surgery...yet. I have to limit my activity and slow down. Take my medication and take care of myself. If any of you who are reading this feels like you are alone, even with a room full of people, or in a doctor's office, you aren't alone. You are never alone as long as you believe in a Power Greater

than yourself. Even if you have trouble believing in that... let me tell you that your Higher Power believes in YOU! And I believe in you. I am no longer a hostage of using and NO LONGER ALONE! I have family and friends in this program and most importantly, I have a Higher Power who has shown me that I am worthy of love and life today. Life to me is precious, and every person I encounter during my day has a message for me for that day. Whether it's good or bad, I am truly grateful for the chance to have the life that I have. Thank you all for showing me what life has to offer.

Sharon B.
Cottonwood Falls, KS



"Take my will and my life
Guide me in my recovery
Show me how to live"



Welcome to the winter
Of the fading fast rose
Welcome to the life
That you chose
Welcome to the faces
And the places of pain
Welcome to the renegade rain
Welcome to forever
If you ever wanted something
In your life
Welcome to the double edged knife
Welcome to the places
Where your sick spirit roams
Welcome to the place you called home
Welcome to the footsteps
That could walk your soul free
Welcome to that sweet misery
Welcome to the needle
That could wheedle out the essence of
life
For it's a double edged knife
Revised 12/2005

Frequently Asked Questions

Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust (FIPT) Members and vendors with questions about NA's literature, logos, trademarks, and symbols can use this quick reference list, which provides a brief overview of some of the more frequently asked questions about the NA Fellowship's intellectual property. For a legal and more detailed explanation of each question, please refer to *The Fellowship Intellectual*

Property Trust and the NA Intellectual Property Bulletins # 1 through 5. These items may be obtained by contacting NA World Services.

1. What is the Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust?

FIPT is the legal document that outlines (in detail) the relationship between Narcotics Anonymous World Services, Inc. and the fellowship as a whole. Basically, NAWS holds the copyrights to the fellowship's intellectual property (recovery literature, the service symbol, the NA symbol, and the original group logo) on behalf of the fellowship. NAWS is accountable to the fellowship through elected delegates and ultimately the registered groups of Narcotics Anonymous.

2. Why does NAWS protect the copyrights and trademarks?

This is so all of NA's intellectual property remains the property of the fellowship. One of the responsibilities of NAWS, as defined in the FIPT and mandated by the World Service Conference, is to protect the fellowship's intellectual property on behalf of the fellowship.

3. What about using the NA symbol, service symbol, or group logo?

Only registered NA service bodies, NA groups, and vendors licensed by NAWS have legal rights to use NA logos and trademarks, because they are accountable to the owners of those symbols-, the NA Fellowship. This

includes use of our logos on the Internet, flyers, merchandise, banners, etc. See *Intellectual Property Bulletin #1*.

4. Can members, groups, areas, or regions post NA literature or readings on the Internet or send literature out via email or electronic mailing lists?

NAWS is the sole publisher of NA recovery literature, and for that reason no other person or group is allowed to produce or post NA literature anywhere. NAWS does not permit anyone else to post NA literature on the Internet because it puts the copyright for that literature at risk. This includes websites and electronic mailing lists that send out NA literature (or portions of it) via email on a regular basis. NAWS is experimenting with posting information pamphlets on its official website, www.na.org, so registered service bodies can provide links from their own websites and do not need to post the actual literature on their own site.

5. But if I am a member, then don't I "own" the symbols? Can I use them where I want or on my personal website?

No. If you are an NA member, you do *not* own the trademarks to NA's symbols or the copyrights to NA's literature. The Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous owns the symbols and literature, and you are a member of that fellowship. In essence, you own a piece of "stock" in NA-but you do not own NA. That stock gives you the ability to participate, along with the rest of the fellowship, in making decisions about the use of NA's property.

Individual members are not accountable to the fellowship, but are allowed to create one or two items using an NA symbol for personal use. See *Intellectual Property Bulletin #2*:

6. Can we use NA symbols along with the trademarks of another organization?

No. It is against the law to use any of the NA

trademarked logos in conjunction with the trademarks, identifying artwork, or registered slogans (e.g., Harley Davidson®, Looney Toons®, Dream Catchers®) of another organization or company. First, in order to use the other trademarks, you would need to get written permission from those companies (which most companies will not give you); and second, it goes against NA traditions to affiliate NA with any other organization. For example, placing the NA symbol in artwork that “resembles” a certain motorcycle company’s logo is against NA traditions *and* against the law. *Did you know? You may have seen the NA symbol being used in a Dream Catcher®. Yeah, it looks cool, but the Dream Catcher® is a registered trademark, and NAWS was contacted by the owner and asked not to use their property.*

7. Why does NAWS give vendors a license to use NA’s property?

There is a “use-it-or-lose-it” policy when it comes to trademarks. If NAWS does not use the trademark on a particular type of item (e.g., jewelry, apparel, etc.), then the fellowship will lose ownership of the trademark on that type of product. Since NAWS does not produce all the various items that our members want, they license vendors to produce those items instead. The licensing program allows for the fellowship to maintain ownership of the trademarks and ensure that these trademarks are used appropriately. Licensing a vendor to use NA logos and trademarks is *not*, in our opinion, a violation of the Sixth Tradition.

8. Do we have to let a registered vendor sell merchandise at our NA event just because they have a license from NA World Services?

No. As stated in *NA Intellectual Property Bulletin #3*, a vendor license from NAWS does not grant access to NA events or functions. A vendor license simply grants a ven-

dor the right to use NA trademarks on its items, not the right to sell that item at an NA event. Only the NA service body responsible for the event can give permission to a licensed vendor. Just because you have a vendor license does not mean the service body has to let you sell anything at their event, function, convention, learning day, marathon, dance, etc. *Did you know? Many vendors get a license from NA World Services believing that it gives them the right to sell their merchandise at the world convention. At present, the world convention uses only one tape vendor and one jewelry vendor. They are both selected through a formal Request For Proposal process. Many licensed vendors are disappointed to find that the license is not an all-access pass to all NA events.*

9. If a group or registered NA service body wants to create merchandise for its event, do they need to obtain a license from NAWS?

All groups and registered NA service bodies have the right to use the NA logos without permission from NAWS within the boundaries laid out in the *NA Intellectual Property Bulletin #1*. This is because they are directly accountable to the owners of that property—the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. Groups have a slightly different relationship with the fellowship that is outlined in detail in *IPB #1*.



There’s more to this article, just not enough space. If you would like it in it’s entirety (all 12 questions), please e-mail a request to the editor and I will send it to you in PDF format.

MID AMERICA REGION ~ DEMOGRAPHICS SURVEY



What is this survey about? We are conducting this survey to improve information about our membership in order to strengthen our public relations efforts and learn more about how and where we carry our message. Please help us fulfill this priority by completing this survey only once. Remember, this is anonymous and no names are needed.

1. Gender

- a. Male
- b. Female

2. My age is _____ years.

3. The county I live in:

4a. Do you have a sponsor now?

- a. Yes
- b. No

4b. Sponsoring others (Check *one* only)

- a. I sponsor _____ people.
- b. I don't sponsor anyone.

5. How often do you normally attend NA meetings? (Fill out *one* line only)

- a. _____ times a week
- b. _____ times a month
- c. _____ times a year

6. What service commitments do you have?

(Check all that apply)

- a. Hospitals and institutions (H&I) commitment
- b. Public information (PI) and/or phone line commitment
- c. Meeting commitment (secretary, treasurer, coffeemaker, literature person, etc.)
- d. Area or regional commitment
- e. World service commitment
- f. I currently have no service commitments

7a. Employment status (Check *one* only)

- a. Homemaker (if you check this, go to question #8)
- b. Employed full-time
- c. Employed part-time
- d. Retired (if you check this, go to question #8)
- e. Unemployed (if you check this, go to question #8)
- f. Student

7b. Primary type of work (Check *one* only)

- a. Manager/Administrator
- b. Educator
- c. Health professional
- d. Service worker
- e. Professional/Technical
- f. Sales worker
- g. Craft worker/Artisan
- h. Laborer
- i. Clerical worker
- j. Transportation worker
- k. Other (including self-employed)

8a. Most influential entities in your decision to come to your first NA meeting. (Check up to three only)

- a. NA member
- b. NA literature
- c. NA meeting in jail
- d. Nar-Anon member
- e. AA member or group
- f. Treatment facility
- g. Counseling agency
- h. Family
- i. Non-NA friend or neighbor
- j. Health care provider
- k. Correctional facility
- l. Court order
- m. Probation or parole officer
- n. Employer or fellow worker
- o. Newspaper, magazine, radio, or TV
- p. Member of clergy
- q. School counselor, teacher, or administrator
- r. Other: _____

8b. Of the items checked above, which one would you rate as *the most influential*?

(write the letter corresponding to your choice in the blank space below)
