

**SON OF  
BEST OF  
MID-AMERICA  
NEWSLETTER  
1983-1990**

ISSUE #7/8, 1994

DOUBLE ISSUE

*Fantastic!*



Howdy all, my name is Nate, and I am an addict. I am also the Editor and along with Maria, we have brought you these last two double issues of the M.A.N.. This latest "Best Of" issue brings back many memories of my early recovery and the state of NA in the early 1980's. Lots of things were different, some were the same. The Newsletter's first issue of record was in January of 1983. Donna F. was the editor then and the issue was small and disorganized (like I said, some things are the same). An issue cost \$1.00 back then, and I'm proud to say that 12 years later an issue of the Mid-America Regional Newsletter costs the same as in 1983. The focus of some of the articles was working on the "Just For Today" meditation book project and flyers heralded the first ever Mid-America Regional convention which happened at Lake Ozark, Missouri in 1983. You see, way back in 1983, the Mid-America Region still consisted of four states! Missouri, Kansas,

Nebraska and Oklahoma. Nebraska would soon split off as would Missouri and finally Oklahoma the next year. The 1st edition of the Basic Text was hot off the press and many addicts who had been using the White Book only, got a copy of the Basic Text and read it for the first time in their recovery! My hat is off to the eight editors that kept the Mid-America Regional Newsletter going from 1983 to 1990.

Donna F. was the first, then Linda M. followed by Julie P. and Marci W., Dan C., Jeff M. and Jeri S. and Laura Mc. Thank you for all your hard work! Hope you enjoy this blast from the past!

In Service,  
*Nate F.*  
 Editor

**"A New Beginning"**  
 MID-AMERICA REGIONAL CONVENTION FOR N.A.  
 April 1-3, 1983

LODGE OF THE  
**four seasons**  
 LAKE OZARK, MISSOURI

SATURDAY WITH SPEAKER JOHNNY H FROM LAKESHORE, MISSOURI

ON THE CONVENTION  
 REGISTRATION FEE  
 - \$10.00  
 - \$10.00 FOR 2 NIGHTS  
 - \$10.00 FOR 3 NIGHTS  
 - \$10.00 FOR 4 NIGHTS  
 - \$10.00 FOR 5 NIGHTS  
 - \$10.00 FOR 6 NIGHTS  
 - \$10.00 FOR 7 NIGHTS  
 - \$10.00 FOR 8 NIGHTS  
 - \$10.00 FOR 9 NIGHTS  
 - \$10.00 FOR 10 NIGHTS



REGISTRATION FEE  
 - \$10.00  
 - \$10.00 FOR 2 NIGHTS  
 - \$10.00 FOR 3 NIGHTS  
 - \$10.00 FOR 4 NIGHTS  
 - \$10.00 FOR 5 NIGHTS  
 - \$10.00 FOR 6 NIGHTS  
 - \$10.00 FOR 7 NIGHTS  
 - \$10.00 FOR 8 NIGHTS  
 - \$10.00 FOR 9 NIGHTS  
 - \$10.00 FOR 10 NIGHTS

**LIVE-BAND!**  
 DANCING NITELY!

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE NO. \_\_\_\_\_ ROOM NO. \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail all registrations directly to:

REGISTRATION  
 CONVENTION  
 ROOM 2  
 HEALTH FEE

MARCC -  
 306 WALL  
 JOPLIN, MO. 64801

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE NO. \_\_\_\_\_ ROOM NO. \_\_\_\_\_

# May 1983

## SOME MORE GOOD THOUGHTS.....

### One's message

From time to time I stop to think of people in the street  
I'm sure you know cause most of us experienced it's defeat  
Out there in some forgotten town-or in a darkened room  
We realized that we were standing face to face with doom.

Remembering the life I lived where selfishness deceived  
A time when I loved nothing more than powder or a leaf  
Returns me to Reality when everything seems lost  
Reminds me that I almost paid the nearly fatal loss.

So here and now I'd like to state my feelings on this page  
I'm grateful for what's come to me at such an early age  
Through ever guiding patience your love helps me with today  
I thank you for the gift that you so freely give away.

Then let me always greet the souls who wander through the door  
And let them know they have a chance to Die or Live once more  
To leave or stay-to use or not-surrender to defeat  
And share my faith so they won't have to suffer in the street.

Anonymous, Topeka, Ks.

The next articles are from a Literature-generating meeting  
held in Springfield, Mo at Regional mtg April 30th.

### GRATITUDE

Being grateful is a new experience for me. I'm grateful for  
being clean today, and I'm grateful for being alive. When I  
get up in the morning I thank God for giving me another day.  
When I go to bed I thank HIM for helping me through the day.  
Before I came into the program I was grateful for nothing,  
resentful of everything. It was not a very pleasant way to live.  
Today I'm grateful for NA, which taught me to be grateful for  
the life I have today, One Day at a Time.

### GRATITUDE

Gratitude is one of the first good feelings I received when I  
came to NA. I had never experienced it before, never been truly  
grateful for anything. At first the feeling was for being clean.  
Now I make a list to view my progress, to see if I'm grateful  
for things only or also for new thoughts & feelings. At times,  
the feeling overwhelming that it brings tears to my

1983

# MID-AMERICA REGIONAL CAMPOUT

Fellowship For Freedom

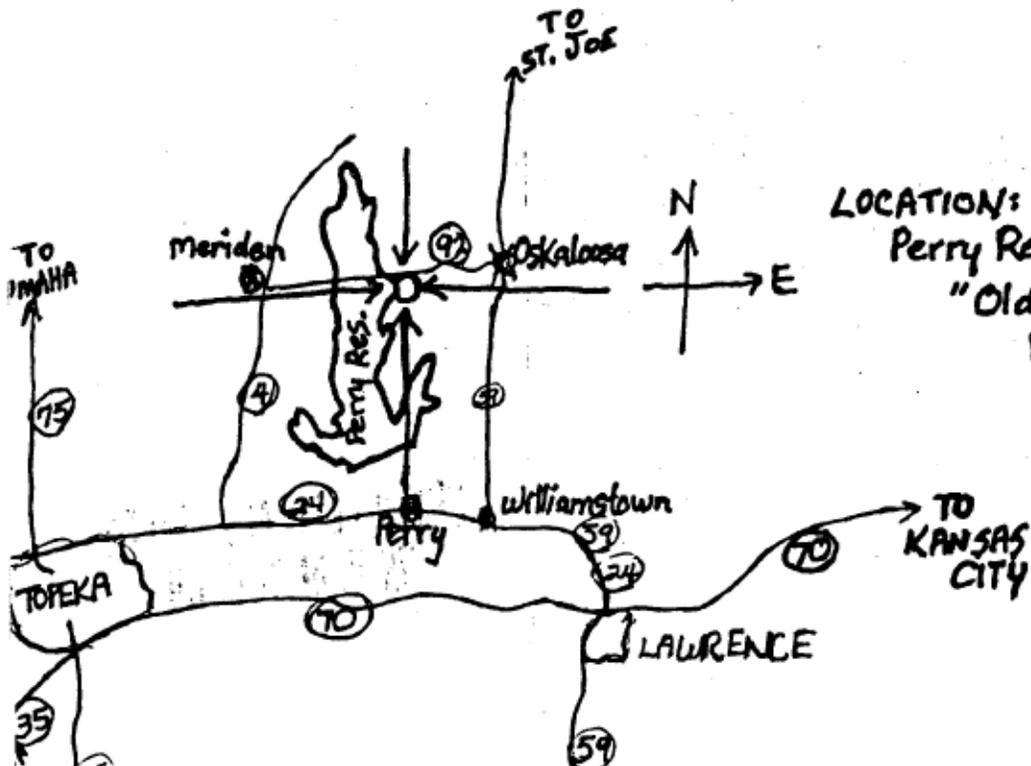
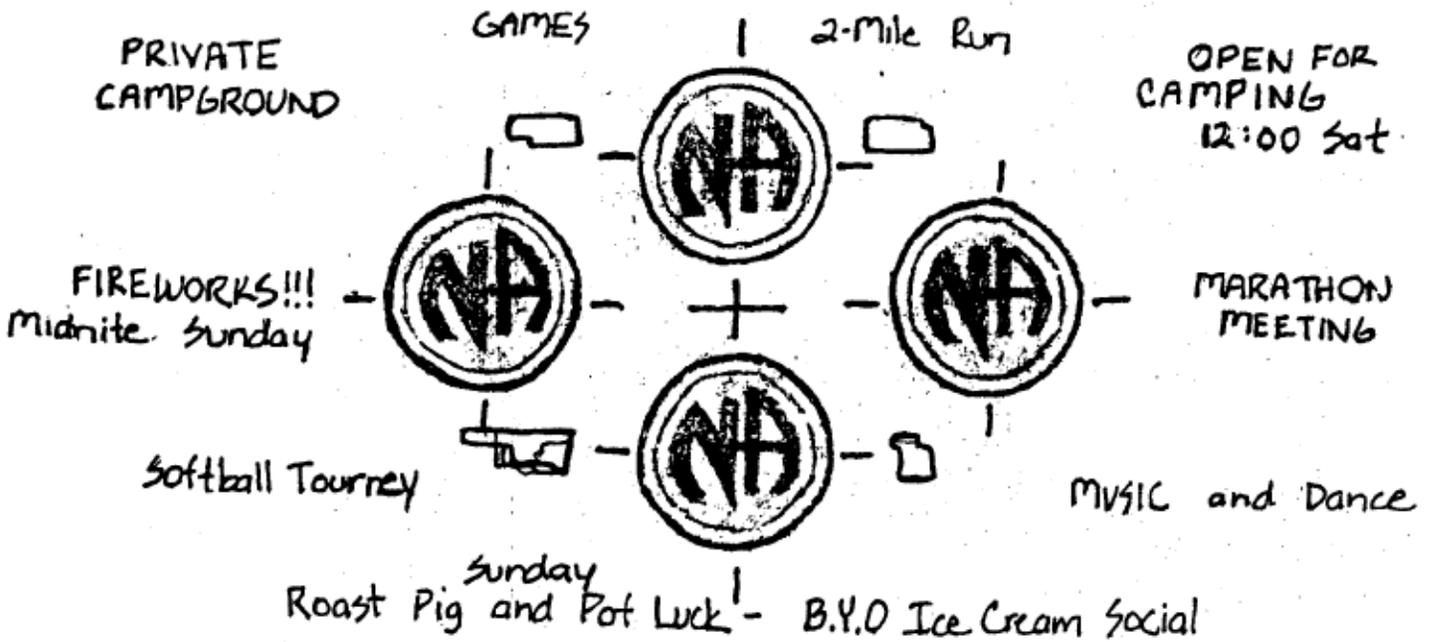
brings you...

## "PERRY PIG OUT"

Sharing  
Caring

Learning  
Growing

JULY 2,3,4th '83  
"To Celebrate Freedom"



LOCATION:  
 Perry Res. - NE Area of Lake  
 "Old Military Trail"  
 Follow signs "P.P.O."

### FOR INFO:

- LINDA M. 913 842 7890
- GLENN S. 913 232 6997
- DAVE K. 913 234 3629
- LARRY V. 913-842-2632

# WORLD REPORT

## DID YOU KNOW:

The WSO has a new address and phone number?

World Service Office  
16155 Wyandotte St.  
Van Nuys, CA 91406  
#213/780-3951

The WSO sends out a newsletter called the NEWSLINE and if you would like to receive one all you have to do is ask that your name be put on the mailing list?

The WSO has a packet of unapproved literature that costs \$10 which people can order so that they may review it and send their input to the World Literature Committee?

Speaking of which, most of the literature that was being worked on for this year's WSC, is still being worked on for next year's WSC. Now is the time to send in your input. One project still in progress is a daily meditation guide called Just For Today.

## Guidelines for Preparing Input...

1st Part — 70 to 80 Words Maximum    2nd Part — 60 to 70 Words Maximum  
Please be consistent with the "We" and "I" styles as indicated on the format example.  
Submit all input typewritten on 8½ x 11" paper, please (preferably double-spaced).

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## List of Suggested Topics...

We ask that if input is written on one of these numbered topics, please indicate which topic (by number) so we can file it accordingly. If you would like to write on a different or more specific topic than the suggested topics here, feel free to do so. Since this is a book written by and for N.A. members, all material submitted must be original. Thank you... Also feel free to develop any of the topics below.

- |                 |                     |                                       |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Anonymity    | 34. Envy            | 67. Responsibility                    |
| 2. Recovery     | 35. Lust            | 68. Perfectionism                     |
| 3. Unity        | 36. Impatience      | 69. Caring and Sharing                |
| 4. Service      | 37. Sex             | 70. The Written Message               |
| 5. Fellowship   | 38. Clean Time      | 71. Unmanageability                   |
| 6. Honesty      | 39. Commitment      | 72. Character Defects                 |
| 7. Sponsors     | 40. Belonging       | 73. Admission vs. Acceptance          |
| 8. Newcomers    | 41. Participation   | 74. Spiritual Awakening               |
| 9. Oldtimers    | 42. Depression      | 75. Peace of Mind                     |
| 10. Relapse     | 43. Self-pity       | 76. Unselfishness                     |
| 11. Humility    | 44. Worry           | 77. Willingness to Try                |
| 12. Growth      | 45. Trust           | 78. Miracles Happen                   |
| 13. Happiness   | 46. Acceptance      | 79. An Addict Alone... No More!       |
| 14. 12 Stepping | 47. Higher Power    | 80. Hugs not Drugs                    |
| 15. Forgiving   | 48. Faith           | 81. Keep Coming Back                  |
| 16. Freedom     | 49. Courage         | 82. A Day at a Time                   |
| 17. Friends     | 50. Prayer          | 83. Taking it Easy                    |
| 18. Gratitude   | 51. Serenity        | 84. Live and Let Live                 |
| 19. Compulsion  | 52. Wisdom          | 85. Clean and Serene                  |
| 20. Addiction   | 53. Surrender       | 86. Principles Before Personalities   |
| 21. Membership  | 54. Love            | 87. 12 Steps - Each Taken Separately  |
| 22. Disease     | 55. Sanity          | 88. Application of the 12 Traditions  |
| 23. Amends      | 56. Meditation      | 89. Today, I Live                     |
| 24. Inventory   | 57. Progress        | 90. An Addict Alone is in Bad Company |
| 25. Tolerance   | 58. Patience        | 91. 13th Stepping                     |
| 26. Temptation  | 59. Sincerity       | 92. Misconceptions                    |
| 27. Ego         | 60. Tolerance       | 93. Hope                              |
| 28. Resentment  | 61. Priorities      | 94. Self-Acceptance                   |
| 29. Guilt       | 62. Goals           | 95. Dreams                            |
| 30. Pride       | 63. Powerlessness   | 96. Involvement                       |
| 31. Remorse     | 64. Openmindedness  | 97. Listening                         |
| 32. Anger       | 65. Procrastination | 98. Understanding                     |
| 33. Complacency | 66. Projection      | 99. It Works... if You Work It!       |

## Send Input To:

MID-COAST R.S.C.  
P.O. Box 26096  
Indianapolis, IN 46226  
Attn: Lit. Sub-Committee

## For Further Info, Contact:

Donna K..... (312) 422-7417  
Alan B..... (414) 453-1512  
Danny K..... (312) 423-8633  
Jaye B. .... (312) 880-5283  
Micki H..... (317) 873-6519

Let go...

May 1984

- to "let go" does not mean to stop caring, it means I can't do it for someone else.
- to "let go" is not to cut myself off, it's the realization I can't control another
- to "let go" is not to enable, but to allow learning from natural consequences
- to "let go" is to admit powerlessness, which means the outcome is not in my hands
- to "let go" is not to try to change or blame another, it's to make the most of myself
- to "let go" is not to 'care for, but to care about
- to "let go" is not to fix, but to be supportive
- to "let go" is not to judge, but to allow another to be a human being
- to "let go" is not to be in the middle arranging all the outcomes but to allow others to affect their destinities
- to "let go" is not to be protective, it's to permit another to face reality
- to "let go" is not to deny, but to accept
- to "let go" is not to nag, scold or argue, but instead to search out my own shortcomings and correct them
- to "let go" is not to adjust everything to my desires but to take each day as it comes, and cherish myself in it
- to "let go" is not to criticize and regulate anybody but to try to become what I dream I can be
- to "let go" is not to regret the past, but to grow and live for the future
- o "let go" is to fear less, and love more

# MID-AMERICA NEWSLETTER

October - November 1984

## The N.A. Game

<p>"Sick and tired of being sick and tired" Go to a meeting. (Step One)</p>		<p>Went to an old friend's party. Got loaded on "just one". Go back to Step One</p>	<p>Start saying please in the morning, and thank you at night</p>		<p>Suddenly realize you've been talking to God, as you understand Him. (Step Two)</p>
<p>Enter a new world.</p>	<p>Finally made amends to an old employer. (Last one on list) (Step Nine)</p>	<p>STOP HERE until you roll one.</p>	<p>Made amends to your family. Never felt better.</p>	<p>Went over list of amends with sponsor. (Step Eight)</p>	<p>Got thirteen-stepped. Roll dice. On 1 go back to step one else you are out of game.</p>
<p>Was rude to another NA-- promptly said you were sorry. (Step Ten)</p>	<p>"Continued to practice these principles in all of our affairs." Go to S. One</p>		<p>Went on twelfth step call. The other guy didn't make it but you did.</p>		<p>After meeting go drink coffee with others--have a great time!</p>
	<p>Get up half an hour early each day to pray and meditate. (Step Eleven)</p>		<p>Complacency sets in. Quit going to meetings get loaded. Go back to Step One</p>	<p>Get down on knees and ask God for help. (Step Seven)</p>	<p>Life's hell, nothing's going your way. Roll 1, go forward else go backwards.</p>
<p>Completed Steps Four &amp; Five. Your life takes an 180 turn.</p>		<p>Get resentments against other NA's. Quit going to meetings. You're out of the game.</p>	<p>Lost best friend by being dishonest. Decide to do (Step Six)</p>		
<p>Shared everything with sponsor. You are on your way now! (Step Five)</p>	<p>Write inventory. Stick it in drawer. Stay here until you roll a 1. (Step Four)</p>		<p>Go to NA campout. Have the time of your life!!</p>		<p>You've surrendered!! Life gets better. (Step Three)</p>

# July 1985

## Questions & Answers

The Board of Trustees receives lots of questions in the mail about Traditions. Here are some of their answers.

Q. In our meeting format it says that newcomers are welcome and that it is all right to attend the first meeting while under the influence of drugs but must thereafter come clean. This is for the protection of the group. Is this statement a violation of our Traditions?

A. It is our belief that this statement does in fact violate Tradition Three, the assumption

being that it is all right for someone to come under the influence to one meeting, but thereafter come clean.

Our literature and our Third Tradition state "the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using." Our Fifth Tradition states, "Each group has but one primary purpose, to carry the message to the addict who still suffers." To use a format which prohibits the still-using addict from meetings is contrary to our traditions.

Q. Our group uses the Day by Day book by Hazelden in two of our meetings. Our group knows this is not N.A.-approved literature, but our group conscience feels it is not in violation of any of our Traditions.

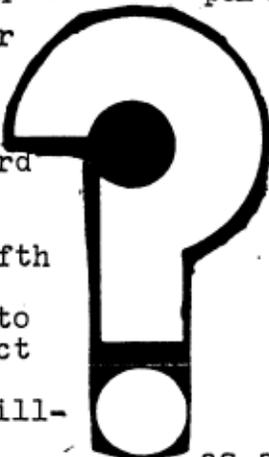
A. Every month the World Service Board of Trustees receives at least two letters regarding the use of non-N.A. approved literature. This month there are three such letters: one regarding the use of A.A.'s Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions; one regarding the reading of the Bible; and yours. All three letters state that their group conscience approves of the use of these materials, and that they have the right to use any literature of their choice by virtue of the group conscience.

Narcotics Anonymous is a Twelve Step program of recovery from the disease of addiction. It is not a program of recovery as set up by A.A., the Bible or Hazelden. When we dilute our message of recovery with literature other than N.A.-approved, we create confusion in the minds of the newcomer. They are often confused as to whether the N.A. Program is really A.A., a religious Bible study, or a part of Hazelden. The World Service Board of Trustees believes that the use of literature not approved by N.A. does affect other groups and N.A. as a whole. The seeds of controversy, chaos, and disunity are planted which ultimately are capable of destroying N.A. as a whole. The distinction of our Fellowship as a separate entity is clouded and unfortunately newcomers may be lost in the confusion.

Many of us use other literature in our personal programs, as an adjunct to recovery. Some use meditation guides, some read the Bible, and some members read other literature regularly as part of their recovery process. However, literature other than N.A.-approved literature belongs outside of our meetings.

We suggest that if your group feels strongly about having a meditation book or pamphlet, you form a literature committee and begin to generate material for a meditation guide for N.A.

We have Twelve Traditions. Group conscience is a part of Tradition Two and when it is followed in conjunction with Tradition Four it does not allow one to override the other or any other Tradition while remaining a part of N.A. An N.A. meeting to be considered an N.A. meeting must fully comply with all of the Twelve Traditions.



# Jan '86    The Man in the Glass

When you get what you want in your struggle for self  
And the world makes you king for a day,  
Just go to a mirror and look at yourself  
And see what that man has to say.  
For it isn't your father or mother or wife  
Whose judgement upon you must pass,  
The fellow whose verdict counts most in your life  
Is the one staring back from the glass.

Some people might think you're a straight-shootin' chum  
And call you a wonderful guy.  
But the man in the glass says your only a bum  
If you can't look him straight in the eye  
He's the fellow to please, never mind all the rest  
For he's with you clear to the end  
And, you've passed your most dangerous test  
If the guy in the glass is your friend.

You may fool the whole world down the pathway of years  
And get pats on the back as you pass  
But your final reward will be heartache and tears  
If you've cheated the man in the glass.

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Dec '95

# Questions & Answers

The Board of Trustees answered the following questions on Traditions for various groups, areas and regions.

Q. Our Sixth Tradition speaks of endorsement. In our approved literature "Why Are We Here," we refer to A.A. Is this not an endorsement?

A. The reference to A.A. in "Why Are We Here" is not a violation of Tradition Six. It is only an acknowledgement of the origin of our Twelve Steps and Traditions. It goes on to give some background in them and expresses gratitude toward A.A. for allowing us to adapt their steps and traditions to our program.

Q. A halfway house in our area would like to put on a barbecue for N.A. We are a new area desperately in need of funds for the purpose of literature and could really use the money, but are questioning whether it is within the traditions for non-N.A. organizations to conduct activities which benefit N.A. What is your opinion?

A. Groups should follow Tradition Seven and decline outside contributions. This would include organizations conducting activities which benefit N.A. We realize it becomes tempting to get money from other programs because it helps purchase literature or other essential expenses. Nevertheless, it needs to be an element of our recovery as individuals and also as a group that we become self-supporting. To allow other organizations to hold fund-raising functions for N.A. violates Traditions Six and Seven.

Q. I recently received a call from a parole officer who asked me to provide verification that a member is, in fact, attending NA meetings and is involved in our Fellowship. This parole officer will not accept a "Court Card" because he said anyone

can sign it. What do we do?

A. Narcotics Anonymous is a Twelve Step program of recovery from the disease of addiction. The Twelve Traditions make possible our Fellowship and therefore, recovery. Tradition Six prohibits us from affiliation with any other organization or outside enterprise. We are not affiliated with anyone, including probation offices, state parole offices, or correctional facilities. To report on another member's attendance or participation in our Fellowship to any agency or institution is affiliation.

In addition, our Eleventh and Twelfth Traditions protect the anonymity of our members. In our meetings we have a place to share our experience, strength and hope as well as the trials and tribulations of recovery. Without the freedom to express ourselves without fear of what may or may not be reported to an outside agency or person charged with our supervision, our recovery and the recovery of others in our Fellowship would be severely inhibited.

Sometimes courts, parole agencies and probation officers require that "Court Cards" be carried by the persons they supervise and signed by the secretary of the meeting. This is a transaction between the supervising agency and the individual member involved. The individual is free to attend or not attend, participate or not participate. When we as N.A. members actively report to a supervising agency regarding another member, we break our Traditions, affiliating ourselves with the agency. We break another's anonymity and we jeopardize the chance for that person's recovery.

PI committee members should visit the parole or probation department and explain N.A. When individuals in the community gain an understanding of how the program works, many times they are supportive.

Feb '86

# Questions & Answers

The Board of Trustees answered the following questions of Traditions for various groups, areas and regions.

Q. A member of our Fellowship brought an infant to one of our meetings, and as a result, our group found itself involved in a controversy. Some members said this was a violation of the Traditions because there was no way the baby could have a desire to stop using. Our question relates to whether the presence of a baby or children in meetings constitutes a violation of the traditions.

A. The issue of babies or small children in meetings is not a Tradition question but rather a matter for the group conscience. This concerns the mother's or father's welfare and recovery. The real issue seems to be whether an addict with a baby or small child would be unable to obtain a baby sitter and attend the meeting.

Q. We enclose a list of referral sources including hospitals, state and county agencies and Nar-Anon in our referral sources for our telephone hotline. We use a disclaimer with the referrals. Is it appropriate for us to do this?

A. We believe that making specific referrals through our N.A. hotlines would in fact violate the Traditions, with or without a disclaimer. In order to remain consistent with the Twelve Traditions, the entire referral page needs to be removed.

Hotlines are comprised of individual members of the Fellowship who share their experience, strength and hope with individuals who call. Sometimes members suggest that the caller receive medical attention; however, specific referrals should be avoided and common sense needs to be exercised.

Q. In our area we have an N.A. clubhouse and another club whose members include N.A. members. Our local newsletter often includes notices for fund-raising activities by these two groups. In the opinion of the WSB, is this a violation of the Traditions?

A. There should be a separation between the internal but "official" communication of the local N.A. membership and announcements of "more fellowship" activities. It is necessary for non-N.A. activities to be handled separately even though the participants also happen to be members of N.A. Your newsletter should not include fliers or notices for non-N.A. activities even if they have members in common. The program of Narcotics Anonymous is not affiliated with any clubhouse, social group or club. Social clubs and groups have their own guidelines, rules and stipulations for membership. They are not N.A., nor do they fall within the N.A. structure or comply with the Twelve Traditions.

To affiliate the two as you describe is a violation of Tradition Six.

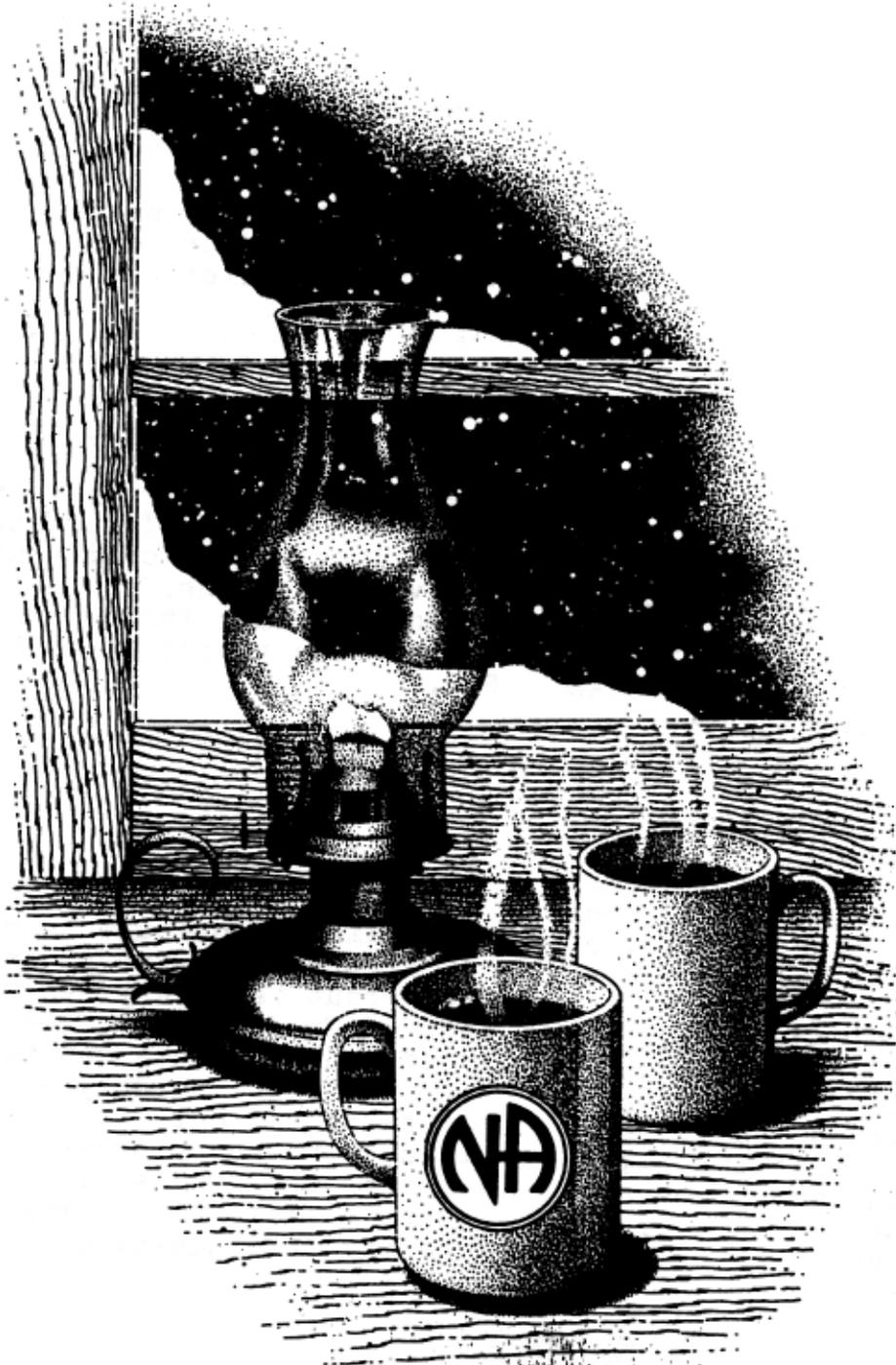
Q. Some members in our area are making announcements and passing out fliers for prayer and meditation workshops. Some of us think this violates Tradition Six.

A. Making announcements and passing out fliers for a prayer and meditation group is a very serious violation of Tradition Six. Only N.A. related announcements can be made in N.A. meetings and only N.A. fliers may be passed out. N.A. is not affiliated with any prayer and meditation groups nor is it such a group. We are a Twelve Step Program of recovery from addiction.



# MID-AMERICA NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY — MARCH 1986



March 1986

## Broken Dreams

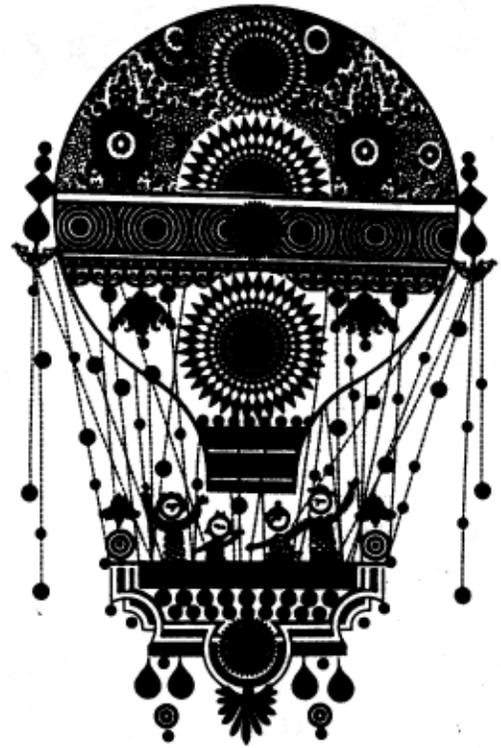
As children bring their broken toys  
with tears for us to mend,  
I brought my broken dreams to God  
because he was my friend.

But then instead of leaving him  
in peace to work alone,  
I hung around and tried to help  
with ways that were my own.

At last I snatched them back and  
cried, "How can you be so slow?"  
"My child," he said. "What could I do?  
You never did let go."

Author unknown

Submitted by Mark P., Liberal, Kansas



### An itch to travel

The one thing that scares me most is death. Death is all around. I've never understood why we die or why we do the things we do. I've got a better idea, now that I've found N.A. It's the Higher Power, which I choose to call God.

It's his will for us to live or die and to do everything we do.

N.A. is a new way of life for me. I've changed. I appreciate it. I hope to meet lots of other people like me or like the people I've met here.

I know about geographical cures

but I've got this thing for traveling everywhere. I'm going to try to get into the service although I know there are drugs and more pressure than I have here. There is only one cure for the itch to travel, do it.

I will always remember what I've learned in Kansas. Thank you God for showing me the love and caring that I got from the Wichita Area. I love you all. Easy does it.

Terry T.  
Hutchinson

Editor's note: Terry joined the Army in February. Hutchinson will miss him.

### BE A SPENDTHRIFT IN LOVE

Love is the one treasure that multiplies by division.

It is the one gift that grows bigger the more you take from it.

It is the one business in which it pays to be an absolute spendthrift: give it away, throw it away, splash it over, empty your pockets, shake the basket, turn the glass upside down, and tomorrow you will have more than ever!

# Questions & Answers

The following are questions written to and answers by the Board of Trustees:

Q. We are a new area and many of our members attend both N.A. and A.A. We recently started a newsletter in our area and we list members who are celebrating clean time anniversaries and at which meeting they will be taking a cake. Some of these members are taking cakes in A.A. and we list those A.A. meetings. Some of us think this practice is a violation of our Sixth Tradition.

A. You are correct. Listing an A.A. meeting in an N.A. newsletter, flier or other publication is a violation of Tradition Six as this constitutes affiliation. It is a violation even if an N.A. member is celebrating his/her anniversary at the A.A. meeting. This practice should be discontinued and effort should be made to encourage these members to take their anniversary cakes in N.A. meetings.

It sounds as though your area is having the same kinds of tradition problems that other areas and regions have when there is very little long-term N.A. recovery in the area.

Q. The chairperson in our N.A. beginners meeting identifies himself solely as an alcoholic. Is this a tradition break?

A. The program of Narcotics Anonymous is a program for addicts seeking recovery from the disease of addiction. While alcohol is a drug and an alcoholic is therefore an addict, in order to participate in an N.A. meeting one must be able to identify as an addict and talk about recovery in N.A. This is for the protection of the group and the newcomer.



Q. May we sell copies of the Basic Text to members for less than we paid for it?

A. We see no problem with your group selling the Basic Text for less than you paid. We believe that this is a matter of group autonomy as long as you are self-supporting through your own contributions.

Q. An individual in our area worked for a produce company and our area's entertainment committee is putting on a fund-raising dinner. The company wants to donate a large quantity of vegetables, salad fixings and fruits to us for our dinner. Someone told us this would be a violation of traditions. Would you clarify?

A. We understand that a produce company is donating a large quantity of vegetables, fruits and salad fixings to your entertainment committee for fund-raising of Narcotics Anonymous. We suggest that service boards and committees not accept this type of donation as we are self-supporting through our own contributions, and need to avoid such outside contributions. We believe the acceptance of donations sets a dangerous precedent, and some type of payment needs to be arranged.

# Clean PERCEPTIONS

Jan 1987

The following is a report by Maynard N. of Topeka about his trip to Canada and the second annual convention, "My Heart Is In N.A."

About eight months ago I saw a flyer for the second annual "My Heart is in N.A." or "Mon Coeur est Dans N.A." I thought it would be a fun trip. I hadn't been to that area of Canada before. Actually I hadn't been East of Chicago. Finding this fact out through introspection caused me to reassess my worldly demeanor. I wasn't quite the jet-setter that I thought. I wanted to experience the love and fellowship of N.A. in a new place. (Besides...London was a bit too far.)

So...I took my show on the road. I decided that due to my humility lesson (see above) I was no longer poised on the brink of greatness, but merely, "moderately spectacular." I grabbed a friend of mine and we boarded a train heading East. Thirty-seven hours on that train ride. Holy cow flop! There were drunks awake until 2:00am. We got to the border and customs asked me if I had ever been arrested?! Uh-oh!...Well...yes...I quickly blurted out about how young I was and that I was drunk at the time--he halted my babbling by asking me if I had any convictions. Saving Grace! God, as I understand Him, had always had the lawyers say to me "plead guilty to a lesser charge and you'll get out." I told the border man-- "No convictions" I embellished my reply with a somewhat dignified and haughty air. He did a double take at this complete reversal of my attitude, from fear to a new found self righteousness, but he went on. I later found out that the scene I had just experienced was repeated at all the border crossings by several hundred recovering addicts. Again God as I understand him showed many of us the path of life that weekend.

After checking into a flea bag hotel (I was right at home) we found our way to the Convention site.

By late afternoon I had met many drug addicts. The most heart-warming were the French-speakers who welcomed me with their limited English. This was very special to me. The fellowship's primary principles and First Tradition were exemplified by our Canadian family. Indeed their openness showed that there are no boundaries or problems when life is lived by spiritual principles.

I realized that I was not "moderately spectacular" at all.

The fellowship is young in Montreal yet time and time again I got feelings of gratitude for my presence at their part of the universe. I know that my experience with Steps Three and Eleven were fundamental in my being in Montreal. They were grateful for me and I was grateful for them. Together, with spiritual principles, we enjoyed each other and our places in creation.

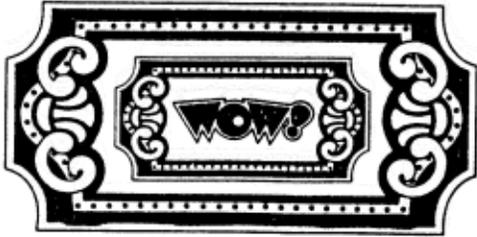
I'm going back, we need each other.

Maynard N.  
Topeka, Ks



# Clean PERCEPTIONS

March 1987



## IT WORKED AGAIN

I have stayed straight though another Christmas. It's another miracle. I am still new enough to be constantly amazed by the "real magic" of the program.

Not only am I staying straight, but now I am reaping the rewards and really feeling and accepting those normal highs and lows of the holiday season. I am free.

I could never do that before. I was a fearful slave..

Without drinking and using, the normal friend and family activities were just too overwhelming. I couldn't handle the joys or the disappointments. After I became estrange from my family I couldn't stand their absence or the unfairness of life. I felt sorry for "poor me". I couldn't face the fact that I was very sick with "our" terminal disease of addiction. "I" had it.

"The real magic" of the program is our steps of recovery, but I must work them.

Guided by my sponsor and my high power and constantly inspired by my fellow members. I have found myself and am now a part of something far greater than myself. I belong.

I know now the "magic that works" needs us. I must go to meetings, share, follow suggestions, ask for help, and work our steps.

What 'simple magic' for such wondro results. I'm going to keep coming back. I want more of life. See you 'round the table.

DAVE T.  
CHEMICAL ABUSE GROUP  
KANSAS CITY NA

The words had dried up long ago  
That now rush through my head  
To think that only days ago  
I wished that I was dead  
Grateful for your help am I  
I'm happier by far  
The cost was just one dollar  
And a prayer upon a star

RANDY  
KANSAS CITY NA



**Faith  
in the  
N.A.  
Way**

March 1997

### I FOUND HOPE!

I started using so I could fit in with people and gain a feeling of belonging. I always felt unique. I felt inferior to other people. Using drugs gave me a feeling of confidence. I wasn't able to fit in with people and feel OK about myself. For the first several years of my using, drugs were a social activity for me and I told myself that they were the answer to all my problems. The only problem I had with drugs at this time was running out.

I got married to an addict and we started raising a family. Things weren't great but whenever we had problems we blotted them out with drugs and we kept rolling along.

Eventually my wife's drinking got way ahead of her. She reached her bottom and sought help through another fellowship. I continued to use drugs. My wife urged me to do something about my problem. I could either stop using or seek help in NA. I told her that I didn't have a drug problem, I stopped using narcotics and "just" smoked pot and pot wasn't a drug.

After 5 years of her recovery and my getting loaded she got sick and tired and left me. Within two years my kids had left also. As far as I was concerned it was not because of drugs. They were my only friend, now that every one had deserted me I devoted all my time and energy to getting loaded. Drugs were no longer a social activity, but something I did alone. My life became very isolated and it was very hard to talk to people. I reached a point when I was miserable when I wasn't loaded and didn't feel a whole lot better when I was loaded. Life became meaningless. I was alone and filled with fear and resentment. I felt I couldn't go on like this for too much longer. I started praying to God to work a miracle in my life.

Shortly there after I got a slip of paper from the Post Office telling me to come pick up a package. It was the NA text signed from an anonymous friend. I almost threw it away but I decided to take it home so I could examine it to figure out who sent it. As I thumbed through it I kept reading "If you are an addict give yourself a break and read this book." The book seemed like it was about me. As I kept reading I started to get a small glimmer of that my life could change. I decided to check out the meetings to see what it was all about. At my first meeting I was unable to talk and felt hopeless. I felt like no matter what I did to try to help myself the end results would always be the same-- failure. That was 11 months ago and today my life has changed dramatically for the better. I met people who were coping with life One day at a Time and who seemed successful and reasonably happy. I kept going to meetings and got a sponsor, probably the most important part of my program. Today I am able to talk to people both in and out of the fellowship. I am gaining self-respect and am learning to deal with my problems in a whole new way. My problems haven't all gone away but today I am dealing with them in a more positive way. When I surrendered to the program I thought life would be eternally dull without drugs. Today I have some real friends who care about me and my life is fuller than it has ever been. One of my kids has moved back in with me. Today I have real hope that as long as I continue to practice the principles of Narcotics Anonymous everything will be OK!

BOB C.  
KANSAS CITY NA

# Thoughts on Step Six

July 1987

Recently, I found myself in a real mess. My insanity resurfaced in a second and all my character defects sat staring me in the face. My immediate reaction was self pity and I let that take over for about ten minutes. But this time self-pity didn't do the trick. It wasn't working. As it says in the Basic Text, "Where before we could get away with fear, anger, dishonesty or self-pity, we now see where they cloud our ability to think logically." (pg. 31, Third Edition, Revised.)

I also felt anger and fear, but at this point, for once, I couldn't be dishonest with myself. I saw that in my insanity I had done the same thing and expected a different result. Then I felt ashamed and a glimpse of humility came through.

I realized my Higher Power had allowed me to set myself up again with the hope that this time I would see what I had done. And I saw it! What a miracle. But this scared me too.

My Higher Powers presence was powerful. I wanted to deny it and run. And I tried to. I got on the phone and tried to call at least five people. I felt like God was watching me and chuckling. No one was home.

"Oh no," I thought. That means I have to do what I know I need to do - work on Step Six.

You see, the previous four months I'd worked Steps One through Five once again. But then I stopped, with a half-hearted hope that Step Six would work itself.

So I got out my Basic Text and read Step Six. Still not willing to face God one-on-one, I read it again. I realized that in four years of recovery I had never understood this step and had merely skimmed over it in the past because that

was the best of my ability. What a revelation when I connected Steps Two and Six and realized that Step Six is a reaffirmation and deepening of trusting God to take my insanity away.

At first I thought I could work Step Six on lust alone. Then I saw that that's not what it says. It says all these defects of character. A new wave of fear hit me. What would I have left? Then I saw that it didn't matter. I'd have to trust God to leave me with something. And if I align my will with God's, it's a pretty sure thing that if I let these defects go I can move in a spiritual direction and have more assets than liabilities someday.

So finally I wrote some things down, knowing God was patiently waiting for me to pray.

I prayed for the remedy for fear, which is faith. I prayed for restoration of sanity as my character defects are removed. And I said "Here I am. I'm open to Whoever I turn out to be because I trust you, God."

I've been praying this same prayer for a couple of weeks now. And I am feeling better.

I don't know when I'll be entirely Willing. But I know no lightning will strike me to tell me. It will be from within that I know. And at that point, I pray I will continue on to Step Seven.

Julie P.  
Hutchinson

# Clean PERCEPTIONS

July 1987

I thought eternal strength was something of mine, that which not many possessed.

But little did I know as this feeling would grow it would not be synonymous with success.

As I awoke each day and pushed the clouds away, and the sun came shining though. Like a train on the track with a load on its back. My fantasy would be over soon too.

For the truth is something that is hard to face, it's full of pain such as fear and disgrace. And bigger people seem to turn their backs, they seem diligent, evasive and unclear of the facts.

So who do you turn to in this time of need, a time when all seems dim. As you sit back and ponder and let your mind wonder your future looks very grim.

But there is a shining light that you reach for in spite, of all the hurt that you feel.

And that light that you seek, is right at your feet. That light is your very own will.

So take that chance you have nothing to lose except cocaine, marijuana, other drugs and booze.

There's no sure bet when you are playing roulette. But this is the path you must choose.

Because knowing right from wrong may be an old song but the words we seem to forget. It is easy to say I'll just put that away and fall back into self-neglect.

So as the calendar crawls behind these four walls my strength seems to be returning to its peak. But I know for a fact I must stay on track. I have miles to go before I sleep.

ANTHONY K.  
KANSAS CITY NA

WHEN I CARE, AND WHEN I SHARE ...

It Works! In February I took a couple of blank N.A. posters home from a meeting. They laid around for awhile. Finally, I felt so guilty, I filled one out and took it with me to the laundromat. This was in March. In April I received a call from the owner of the laundromat. He said he was a scoutmaster and would like someone to speak to the Boy Scouts about drugs.

On April 26th, Mike T. Tonya P. and myself, (all members of Manhattan's Nameless N.A. Group) drove to Milford Lake to a scout campout and ate lunch with the leaders. After lunch we spoke for forty minutes about our experience with drugs and addiction in general.

Thirty-five scouts and seven leaders gave us undivided attention. I felt that it went just as it was supposed to—and I got a great spiritual high from the experience.



Steve T.

TODAY: I HAVE A PROGRAM

We gave away to N.A.  
Now we are here to stay.  
We lived a life of total hell,  
now we have come to try to get well

SHAYNA  
KANSAS CITY NA

Sept 1987

# Clean Perceptions

ME

When I was a youngster I would hide my thoughts away and I thought that I might look at them again some other day. The farther down I pushed them, the deeper they became. Until one day I felt that they might make me go insane and then I wondered to myself, how can I reach that place way down deep inside me, those things I wouldn't face. So I thought and thought for hours, to try to find the means to get to those deep feelings that stand between my dreams.

After much consideration I could find no way for me to reach the feelings in me so that I might set them free. It was then I knew I had to find someone that I could trust to help me free these feelings or I knew that I would bust. I looked to all my friends and found that none of them was he that I could trust enough to help remove them from in me. Alas, I thought I'll have to trust someone I do not know to help me with this problem and let these feelings go. So I found a place that advertised anonymous friends for free and something deep within me said that's the place to be. I went inside to meet someone and tell them what I needed and let them know that deep in me my feelings needed freed. They told me that they would help me if I did just what they said and also that the tool I'd need was right inside my head. After weeks of confrontation, one by one they came out where I could look at them and give them all a name.

The first one out was anger. It was nasty as could be; the next one out was guilt and I knew that that one's not for me. It was followed then by sadness and I knew it had its place; then glad came up to pause a bit and shine upon my face. I started feeling lighter but I knew that there were more, so I dug a little slower so I could see what each was for. I

played with each a little while so that I might find a little place for all of them just inside my mind.

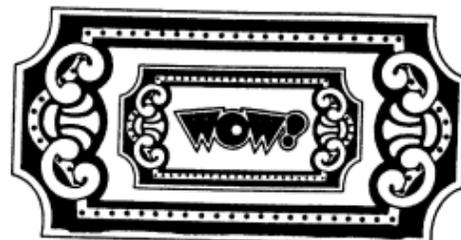
The one I hold the dearest comes from Someone up above the one I want to show the most--the one that I call Love.

JIM C.  
ST. JOSEPH NA



Roses are red,  
violets are blue.  
I found Recovery,  
and so can you!

DEE P.  
KANSAS CITY NA



RECOVERY WITHOUT HONESTY HAS NO GROWTH

July 1988

When I was young I was small for my age, I was the kid who was always getting picked on. As I got older, and naturally as my addiction progressed I began telling lies, making up a whole fantasy life for myself. I began saying that I had murdered people, and that I was highly skilled in martial arts etc. People either believed me or they just weren't sure so they left me alone. It protected me from harm while hiding my insecurities.

I had lived this fantasy for many years. By the time I found N.A. I had lost the ability to distinguish between what was real and what was not. In my mind I had lived all these things, and in my mind they were true.

When I first found N.A. I was in prison for sales, when I was released I was sent to treatment and when I left I thought I was working a good program, that I was honest and open-minded and was growing strong in N.A. What I didn't realize was that I wasn't growing in the program, I was at a standstill. Because of my mental imbalance I was totally incapable of true honesty. The only time I felt good was at an N.A. meeting. I was still living the insanity of my addiction.

I was miserable, I lived with feelings of loneliness, fear, anger, and depression and I couldn't see why. I continually focused on the problem ~~instead~~ instead of the solution. I tried using again for a few days and started coming to meetings again. I felt after that I had really begun to grow. The joke was on me, I was talking the talk real well but was still incapable of walking the walk. I brought fear to the lives of many people through fits of anger and threats of violence and my willingness was next to nothing.

I was eventually violated on my parole and arrested at the parole office. While at the parole office I was questioned by my parole officer about all of the stories I had been telling. I told him that they were all true and that he could prove none of it. I then told him that I would be back to kill him too as I had done it before.

After a couple of days in jail I prayed and asked God "why?" I got my answer. I began to look at the solution instead of the problem. I began to reflect and look deep inside myself, realizing the dishonesty and it's depth for the first time in years I cried.

I am now able to begin growth in the program. I sit in jail but it doesn't matter because for the first time I am truly free and it is a freedom that no one can remove. I am grateful to God, and to all of those I love, my N.A. family.

My H.P. has a reason for all things, I am here for a reason and that reason is to grow. Here in jail they have one A.A. meeting a week. I have begun holding N.A. meetings in my cell because it helps me and I do pray it helps the other men here who join me in meetings. Even in here we continue to grow in numbers. I thank N.A. for the gift of recovery (true recovery) and I thank my H.P. for returning me to sanity.

With N.A. and the love and support of it's members "Today I Live" Recovery without honesty is no recovery at all!! It works when you honestly work it!!!

With Love Ken W. K.S.I.R.

## THE FENCE

A wise man in the program once said "If you're not standing on the fence you don't have to worry about balance" The fence he spoke of was and is a very unusual kind of fence, it is the fence between life and death.

On one side of the fence there is a wild and hungry beast called "addiction" and on the other side is a sidewalk called "recovery".

In my experience I came to know this fence quite well. So many times in the past I had tried to balance myself, walking the top edge of the fence, which is extremely narrow.

Trying to balance is like not practicing active addiction, yet not giving our total selves to recovery. By trying to balance, we stand in between the two and it is very dangerous. We must surrender ourselves totally to our recovery and walk steadily on solid ground.

Trying to balance on the fence we leave ourselves open to relapse. The beast of addiction is both cunning and baffling, and will toy with us to try to cause our loss of balance and a fall.

Don't try to balance by walking the fence, jump down on solid ground and totally commit yourself to recovery.

I tried to balance on the fence and I fell. I am grateful to my higher power that I was able to climb back up and then set my feet on solid ground. I now walk the sidewalk and try to help others down from the fence for I can only keep what I have by giving it away.

Stop trying to balance climb down and concentrate on the 12 steps on the sidewalk of recovery.

Today I pray that I may never have to try and balance, I pray that one day at a time I may always stand on solid ground.

I send you all of my love and support, for you are all my family in NA.

With unconditional love

Ken W. KSIR

Aug 1989



December 1989

GIFTS OF RECOVERY

Gifts of recovery as seen by me,  
Come from the heart,  
And they are all for free.

Thanks to this fellowship  
for the Love and the Hugs,  
I am free from the use of drugs.

Let Go and Let God  
Is what they tell me,  
The biggest gift I've found from  
that  
Is complete serenity.

My Gratitude Speaks  
Please Believe Me,  
Because through my Higher Power  
I have found the Gifts  
Of Recovery.

Glenn S.  
Meriden, KS  
WTSODMF

MY NEW FAMILY

Since I've been in the Fellowship  
of Narcotics Anonymous, I've found out  
that I've got a huge, world-wide  
family. Even though biologically,  
I only have a brother, I've gotten  
a whole lot of brothers, sisters,  
aunts and uncles and even some kids  
in this program. Every person in  
every meeting are fellow addicts,  
so they're my family through drug  
addiction, not blood. This, to me,  
is better and closer than blood family.  
My blood family hasn't always been  
there for any and every reason, but  
my N.A. family has been. They've  
seen my hard times, painful times,  
joyous times and even temper tantrums.  
They still love me, no matter what.  
My thanks, gratitude and LOVE to  
the people of my big "Family."

Janice S.  
Somewhere in Kansas

MERRY MIRTH

'Twas the night before the dance,  
and all through that place,  
I was thinking of all the  
things I had to do,  
I wasn't in a very good space.

When all of a sudden  
I heard such a clatter  
I opened up my Basic Text  
Wow!, I knew what was the matter.

I hadn't worked step three  
or ten, eleven or twelve  
I thought I was hallucinating  
When in my mind popped this elf.

He said, "Listen, Nit Wit,  
Dig in; Dig in; to that old prayer kit.  
Ask God for the guidance  
To get you out of this pit."

I asked God for the guidance,  
The courage and the sanity  
In a matter of time  
I was enjoying that ole serenity.

Glenn S.  
Meriden, KS  
WTSODMF



December 1989

WHAT HAS NA GIVEN ME?

It's given me a chance to make my own decisions and see what life is really about. It's given me true friends; friends who are there through thick and thin. When things are rough, these friends are there to help me out however they can. When things are good, these friends are there to help me celebrate. Now instead of picking up that first pill, I use the phone and talk it out. I can face my fears and joys. I travel down the road some times and when I do I stop & say hello to those I love, even though I've never met some of these people. When I leave I know that I've got a new friend that I can count on. But the most important thing NA has given me is my life, for without the fellowship and these meetings, I'd be dead and for that I'm forever grateful.

Loren E.  
Augusta, KS

GIFT OF RECOVERY

There are so many wonderful changes in my life since coming to Narcotics Anonymous that first night.

Learning that I could live without drugs and alcohol, one day at a time. Seeing a room full of people with genuine smiles. Laughter filled the rooms and there was a warmth in the atmosphere.

People hugged me and told me to keep coming back. By the grace of God, that I had not come to know or understand, I returned.

I have found freedom from active addiction, freedom from my mind and the circumstances around me.

I have learned that emotions won't destroy me if I allow myself to feel them.

I have found serenity and peace of mind, most of the time. Honesty, true honesty. I learned I have an ego, anger, lack of trust, character defects. And, there are paths, 12 steps, to free me from them.

Today, I have a personal relationship with a God of my understanding. I have myself and I have friends. Today, I am loved. I can give love and I love myself. Thank you N.A. for a new life.

Laura Mc.  
Wichita, KS



When I came to the program of N.A., I was dazzled and stunned by the people who had a year or more. I could not imagine myself ever staying clean for more than one year. I was told to "keep coming back" and "one day at a time". There were many times I was taking it one minute at a time!

That first year was a roller coaster ride for me. I tied a knot at the end of my rope and hung-on during the rough times. During these times of strong desires and urges to use, my main question to my higher power was "what is my purpose". This really bothered me for sometime. I was told again "One day at a time", "in time more will be revealed", and "keep coming back".

After, being a speaker at a speaker meeting, Going on a few twelve step calls, and getting involved with N.A., I picked up my one year chip. I was told that I was a MIRACLE. I believed I was a MIRACLE, as well as everyone else that was at the meetings with me. It was then revealed to me, that this was my purpose in life. As simple as it was, all I had to do was to stay clean and spread the MIRACLE of recovery to the still suffering addict. This helps to KEEP THE MIRACLE ALIVE in me and help others experience the MIRACLES of recovery.

GRATEFUL TO BE HERE OR ANYWHERE  
Joe J.

#### REMEMBER

Whenever you're feeling sad and blue  
Remember picking up is not the thing to do.  
Whenever you're back is against the wall  
Remember to pick up that phone and make that call.  
Whenever you feel like you want a shot  
Remember how hard it is to stop.  
Whenever you feel like you can't go on  
Remember it's just a feeling and it will pass on.  
Whenever your feeling sad and blue  
Always remember God Loves You.

Cidney B.  
Taken from;  
Mid-America Newsletter  
August--September 1986 issue

What does "KEEPING THE MIRACLE ALIVE" mean? It sounds good, there is a lot of power and force behind it. Webster's Dictionary defines Miracle as; "a supernatural event". Upon turning to supernatural It states; "happenings or forces beyond the natural; divine, miraculous".

When I was eleven I had to have two surgeries with numerous Chemotherapy Treatments because I had been diagnosed with a rare, deadly cancer. I was not expected to live more than six months. I can remember my mother and friends saying "It's a Miracle".

Continuing on with life and a fully alive addiction, I was unable to grasp and really feel the impact of this "MIRACLE".

Today, In recovery, I know what a Miracle is. I can feel the forces in my own life daily. An addict living without mind and mood altering chemicals is a Miracle. I have acceptance today of the reality of the Miracles that have taken place in my life. Acceptance of a power greater than myself that has plans for my life. A power that needs me to be alive and clean, with diseases in remission.

Many days, I take these Miracles for granted, I slip into self-pity and self centeredness and cry about my life and the path way I am on. And I remember the pain and the torture of the chemotherapy, the pain and loneliness of additions. Two painful miserable times in my life of chemicals, one to keep me alive, and one of self-destruction.

KEEPING THE MIRACLE ALIVE!! How simple how strong and powerful. Remembering where I came from, turning to my Higher Power and sharing, from the heart, with another addict. Taking care of my physical, mental emotional and spiritual self.

I recall a speaker once talking about the "MAGIC" in the room full of clean addicts, about a thousand of them. And I could feel it. I could feel. I was Alive! And I am the MIRACLE!!! Staying clean today is: KEEPING THE MIRACLE ALIVE!!!!!!!

Laura Mc  
Wichita, Ks.

August 1990

SEARCHING

My entire life I have been searching for something. For a long time I didn't know what I was looking for, spending time trying to do something, without knowing what I am trying to do, is very frustrating. As I looked for this something, I felt like I was losing - never making progress.

What I was never able to comprehend, in my using years, was that losing is finding. While I looked, in every conceivable place, for the experience of life, I was in actuality, separating myself further from the experience I sought.

When I was introduced to the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous, I was told that this program would give me what I was searching for. I still thought I was looking to gain something. What I have found to be the answer was to lose something.

As I progressed through the steps, I tried to change. I tried to rid myself of bad memories and feelings. I have written fourth steps, shared fifth steps, made lists of character defects, and asked that these shortcomings be removed. However, the freedom I sought did not come until I began to make direct amends to the people I had harmed.

I am not sure why I began to feel real freedom at this point in my recovery. I could say simply, because "It Works", but there is a reason why it works.

To look at the harm I had done, began to awaken in me an awareness of why I had reacted to life the way I had. As I sat and talked openly with these people, I saw their humanness. In seeing theirs, I saw my own. I had harmed these people by hurting the part of them that I had been trying to protect in myself. The motivation that had caused harm came from my effort at protecting my own feelings.

I have always been told that I couldn't change the past. I have never been able to argue the reality of that statement. What I have been able to change is the way I and other people in my life feel about the past.

Guilt, remorse, and regret are feelings. It is those negative feelings I want to be free of. For a long time I tried to sedate or obliterate those feelings. By living up to my own past, I have made some big gains in replacing those negative feelings with the positive feelings of forgiveness, acceptance, and hope, for the future.

I have heard it said that humility is only the truth. The truth is not only what I have done, but also why I have done it.

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