



MID AMERICA NEWSLETTER



**Volume 25
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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.



Hello family,

Welcome to the Spring issue of your newsletter. You might notice that this is the start of the 25th year, as listed by volume. There are two errors with this: Our archives start with January 1983 which would be the start of the 26th year, and here at the Literature Committee we have reason to believe that this publication started before 1983, but still haven't come up with documentation to back that. We do have a card catalog dating 1980, whether the MAN actually started then or preparation for a "possible" newsletter had started, I don't know.

Until somebody comes forward or my travels get me in contact with the right person, we'll just focus on this issue and many more to come. Some of you are reading this for the first time while at MARCNA XXV, the 25th annual convention, how ironic. Since this is also emailed out others have already read this or at least glanced through it. If you are not receiving this via email and would like to please send me a note at the address above. I would be more than happy to get you on the email list.

Now for the weather, let's just say I'm ready for spring! Green grass, birds chirping, tornado chasing, golf, yes, I'm definitely ready. But Spring also offers the start of campout season and this year a World Service Conference. I hope by now you all have voted on the motions listed in the Conference Agenda Report (CAR) and discussed the topics. The Regional Delegate (Rod D.) and myself will need your conscience no later than April 15th. Contact your GSR or RCM for more information.

This issue also marks my last "official" issue as your Editor. Two completed terms have come and gone and so far no one has met the qualifications to carry this on. As we search out the right candidate for this, however, I will "unofficially" keep the issues consistent and in your hands.

Jim Editor



Came To My Senses pt. 6

I woke up feeling very serene and actually had a moment of direction with my step work. I grabbed a cup of coffee and started writing. I had been working on my 4th step for about a month now and it was time to finish it. The words just flowed out and I reflected on my Grandparents, parents, and all the other people in my life. I also reflected on what “good” things I could remember, there was a time I actually wasn’t a bad person and I was starting to see how addiction turned me into a person I didn’t like at all. My sponsor, Joe, keeps telling me that addiction is a disease and that I’m not responsible for that, but I am responsible for my recovery. Sometimes that is confusing to me but the more I work the steps and read the Basic Text the clearer it becomes.

I have found that most of the words and phrases I hear in meetings and from my sponsor come out of the Basic Text, that tells me the book really works, I can see it in their recovery. As I am writing I happen to notice the time and had to get ready for work, but the day flew by as I had all these thoughts swirling around in my mind. Fortunately this is Friday and the weekend is almost here. I went straight home from work and once again started writing. Joe must have sensed I was thinking about him early that evening because he called, as soon as I knew who it was I just said, “I think I’m ready.” There was a brief moment of silence then he said, “For what?” Now nervous, I told him my 4th step. Joe didn’t want to waste any time so we skipped the meeting that evening and he came over to hear my 5th step. It was amazing! I started out very slow and cautious but Joe made me feel comfortable and the words came spilling out. To my sur-

prise I was even adding stuff as I went. I was told that being the most thorough that I could would give me more freedom from my past. It wasn’t so much my past as it is me holding on to my past that keeps me sick and self-centered. It felt really good to share my past and get it out in the open; I have never felt so much relief in my life! After I finished I was officially on a cloud.

I was too excited to stay at home and we knew there was a dance that night so off we went. Jimmy was there so I told him the news; he too was excited for me. The dance was at a recovery house and the Steps and Traditions were on the wall. I just stared at the Steps and started reading from six on. After a few minutes I thought to myself, I’ll take a break for awhile, not fully understanding that taking a break from step-work is like standing still on a downward escalator. The dance went well; it’s always nice to be surrounded around other recovery people and I also got to stand for 90 days clean during the countdown. Later that night I slept hard; the benefits of completing my 4th and 5th have gave me a calmness that’s hard to explain. I woke up with three words, honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness. I realized thinking about taking a break from step-work isn’t being honest to me. I also think I’m open-minded enough to listen to what others tell me in meetings, and so far my willingness to work these steps has kept me clean for three months. The thought occurred to me that I could easily end up back in that same misery by taking a “break”. Feeling like I had a secret thought made me feel uneasy so I called Joe and told him what I was really thinking at the dance. He assured me it was natural and that there are many recovering

addicts watching out for me. Three months is still a very critical time even though it seems like an eternity to me.

Feeling like I was still on a cloud, attending the meeting Saturday night was different for me. My awareness was more intact, I saw the room differently and what other members shared just flowed into me. Jim had came into the meeting late and wasn't looking too good, he looked sad or something. I didn't say anything but just set there and watched him, suddenly I too felt sad. I don't know what came over me but I went from elated to depressed in less than two minutes. When it came time for Jim to speak he hesitated for a minute and then blurted out, "Greg's dead". At first I thought to myself, "who's Greg?" and then realized he was the one that was leading my first meeting and then relapsed. Jim went on to share how he had overdosed and died in the hospital. I didn't know him well but for some reason I didn't need to know him, the sadness for Greg and anger for this disease took over my emotions, it became very clear to me that I couldn't afford to "take a break" from working the steps. The rest of the meeting was a blur and the topic shifted. I talked to Jim afterwards and made plans to attend the funeral. The rest of the weekend was spent relaxing and reading the Basic Text. I also grabbed the It Works – How and Why and read step six. I now know that I am an addict, and my new life is one that I don't want to jeopardize.

Attending the funeral was a good experience for me; I met a lot of members that I had never met before. It turned out Greg had been around for awhile before he relapsed and had a lot of friends. I felt sad but grateful; it kind of grounded me from my recent recovery

cloud. Afterwards we all went out to my favorite restaurant. Of course, I actually pay for my food now, what a blessing.

Look for part 7 of this continuing saga in the next issue. If you don't have access to the back issues where this story began let me know. If you have access to the internet just visit www.marscna.com where you can find these and other back issues. TS



From Disappointed

I'm a strong believer in "UNITY" and I think it is sad that there isn't more people who are willing to teach their sponsees that there is such a thing as a service structure or how people need and can be involved. When our old-timers do pass on who will know how to keep us alive or maybe when the old-timer gets burned out?

I've been to some functions in the last year that either no one showed up or people had to guess what to do. I've even heard people with a couple of years clean that didn't know how to do a 12th step call.

I strongly believe that if and when we get back to the basic services we can and will grow stronger. I'm very grateful for my sponsor who pushes me to get and stay involved with service.

*Signed,
sad but hopeful and grateful*

Surrendered Not Broken part 2

(Part 1 printed in the winter 2007 issue)

When all of the women were giving me looks about the treatment of my kids I thought, "Oh screw off you're just jealous" The reality, I knew what they were saying to me and it was the truth, yet my arrogance prevented me from speaking the words, "I don't know how to be a mom... Could you please help me?"

I became the entertainment queen. I figured if I could entertain others then they would love me. What kind of message was that? That recovery is all about fun and entertainment? Is that the message? For people who historically have enormous problems with instant gratification? It makes me laugh to think about how ludicrous that is at the moment.

The education I gained served as the devil's playground for my addiction. Gave the committee in my head better words to attack me with and convince me I was better than everyone else... etc. etc. Until I would rub up against someone who had just as much, then I got intimidated quickly because I am still a drug addict, after all.

Then there was my personal relationships. What a mess... I was still working on getting right with the women... had left the marriage that was killing me... and fell in love with my male best friend. At least that is what I think happened. My perceptions have been known to be off. *Still a work in progress.* What I hadn't done was develop a relationship with me. I was still depending on my relationship to validate me... fill me up... make me whole.... I expected HIM to MAKE me happy. I NEEDED attention to be paid to me.... I was still the victim.... everything was someone else's

fault... The result... when he fell short of my exceedingly high expectations, I hated him for it. Blame became my game, revenge filled my heart... neither of which are *spiritual principles*. My world spiraled out in addictive thoughts and behaviors... I took an excruciatingly painful trip through hell WITHOUT EVER HAVING TO USE... completely destroyed my marriage and severely damaged my friendships in the process.

The disease only has one goal and it is for me to die. My HP wants me to live... in harmony with his spirit and the spirits of my fellows he has given me in unconditional love... When I am living in the disease, I lose me so very quickly and I turn into someone I truly despise... I hurt others... I again become hurricane girl... until I feel like my only way out is to die... In my head, I know absolutely **to use is to die**... so I figured I would skip the using part and just cut to the chase! The only thing that pulled me through the mess was my *Disaster Recovery Team*, composed of all of my sisters and brothers in this enormous fellowship I continue to be graced enough to be a part of, despite my disgraceful behavior. They have taught me the steps by LIVING them in ALL of THEIR affairs... They have taught me that it is also okay to go outside the fellowship and fellowship with other people who live a spiritual life... They have taught me that if I will practice honesty, open-mindedness and willingness, **anything is possible**... With help, I have learned how to practice meditation and prayer, which has reconnected my broken spirit with the only one who can truly heal it... my HP!!

Plus, I have been given the gift of being able to LIVE inside of me, no longer hanging my head in shame and

look up into each and every one of your beautiful eyes!! I am so grateful for this gift of recovery!!! I am so grateful to not have the answers and embrace the process of recovery, knowing that in each stage I will learn how to be a human while growing in the spirit! I am so grateful that I AM NO LONGER BROKEN!

No matter where I am at in recovery...I am exactly where I am supposed to be and I NEVER again have to do anything I don't want to as long as I ask my HP into my life and share the gift with you...

In closing, I will share this...for the first time in my life, I have no husband, boyfriend or lover and I am oddly okay with that...For the first time, I do NOT have to be the center of attention...I am oddly okay with that too...For the first time in my life, I have lived alone for awhile that and not only am I okay with that...I really kind of enjoy it!! I am not lonely anymore... I am not the best mother in the world, but I am trying to be the best mom I can be everyday... I have true friends and a fellowship of people I can love and will love me back regardless of what I or they are 'doing' at the moment. I have a God in my life that I have a personal relationship with, never fails me and is always there. I owe all the credit, honor and glory to my HP for giving me the message of hope and the promise of freedom expressed to me most often by you....my family in Narcotics Anonymous!

I love you all very much

Amy K

Emporia, KS



FREE

I am alive
I am free
I can breathe again.
I found the air, the sun, the flowers and trees
I can see the moon and stars
I can feel Mother Nature at my feet
I found God...I can see...
I have work to do...
Work on me.
I have learned a lot...
You'll see,
I'm new...
Different,
Real...
I am free...
Free from active addiction
Free to love, to learn, to feel.
Grace
Virtue
God's will in my life
It's the decision I make today that will change every tomorrow

I will honor this truth
I don't know the plan
I am just here
Here to see, do, learn and love.

One day, I will find my purpose...
Gods light will be shed
My passion and purpose revealed, until then..
Such a great gift of life I have received,
The unbelievable Grace, God has bestowed upon me.
I am free.
Finally, free to just be me.

Thanks to all of you, NA, for helping me.
April SC
3-16-99

Gratitude

When I hit my bottom, I found myself in jail, again, and alone. I know my story is like a lot of us here in recovery. I am grateful today because I am not alone. I am grateful today because I kept coming back. I was asked by a newcomer "how long do withdrawals take?" You know the best answer I could think of was that no matter how long it takes it would be longer if you pick up now. I was four months clean before I found NA and I was still suffering. When I went to my first meeting and heard the reading "We Do Recover" I knew this was where I belonged. I was at the end of my road and I could no longer function with or without drugs. I was that person. I remember vividly not being able to deal with any situation and I got into a heated argument with my 16 year old nephew. I left my mothers house. I had no clue what I was going to do or where I was going to go so I just walked all over town that night. I walked until three in the morning then I went to the hospital where I knew at the fourth floor there was free coffee for people waiting for new babies to be born. I didn't care I just needed shelter and I had no money and I had nowhere else to go. In the morning I called my mom. She came up to the hospital and brought me some sandwiches. I cried and told her how ashamed of myself I was and that I didn't know what to do. You know she told me that she loved me. She told me that she was proud of me, I couldn't understand how she could be proud of me when I cleaned out her bank account, stole her car, got myself thrown in jail and abandoned my daughter for dope. She said none of that matters, what I'm proud of is you stopped that and you're trying to be better. She asked me to come home and said it would be

OK. So I did, I went home and checked myself into treatment because I needed help. In treatment they recommended NA. I am so grateful today that I went home and I am so grateful today that I went to NA. I have been involved in service, in my personal recovery since I walked through the doors of NA. I have learned so very much in my short time here. When I came to NA I didn't even know how to turn a computer on. NA only promised freedom from active addiction but my rewards through the steps and service have been so much more. I get discouraged when I hear members talk down about service and then complain when newcomers don't get involved. One suggestion to that would be to have a little common sense and tell members what service is. I was involved with PI and H&I for almost six months before someone said what the initials stood for. My sponsor told me to go to those meetings, when I asked her why, she said because it will save your life. And she never told me what they meant either!! I didn't know what it was about but I wanted recovery. So I went. I truly love my service work, it gives me self esteem. I love this program because through my honest hard work with my sponsor I have discovered that I am not all bad. I love this program because it has gotten me through some life changing experiences. I was able to make amends to my mother. I am grateful today because through working this program I see that my mother was there during my darkest hours and because of NA I was able to hold her hand as she walked through her darkest hours and I thank you for all of it. My hope, when I came to NA was just to have my daughter back. Today I have that times three, I have three beautiful girls who

love me and I am able to take the time to love them back. Thank you NA for my beautiful life today.

Suzie Q.

Work the Steps!

My life is based on a foundation, one that was created by actively working the steps of Narcotics Anonymous. My first year in this program I completed two fourth steps and another in my second year. At that time there was no Step Working Guide or It Works - How and Why but the chapter “how It Works” in the Basic Text and a Sponsor’s experience was enough. There was a 4th Step Guide booklet and various treatment center worksheets floating around, and since I did go to an inpatient treatment center I used their’s for the first five steps. The first time I gave my fifth step it was in that center but the member I shared with was not part of or even worked there. When it was completed I burned my fourth step in a can and then kicked it as hard as I could (treatment ritual). The true test, though, came upon going back to my home and living this program. I knew I couldn’t stop what I was doing while in treatment, so I went to my new home group with an open mind, a desire to change my life, and enough willingness to do whatever it took to create this new life.

I often share that I don’t feel like I “work” the steps anymore, I “live” the steps. See, I am a career member of Narcotics Anonymous. I worked hard to build a strong foundation and have reached a point of freedom that, through these steps, will keep getting higher. I recently celebrated nineteen years and still vividly remember my past, my first year of recovery, and the feelings of

desperation that keep me coming back. I have a good relationship with my Higher Power and myself. I have become a part of society instead of fighting it, and I feel privileged to serve in any way I can.

Below is a reading from our meditation book “Just For Today”. I felt it touched on the theme this issue of the newsletter has taken. On the next page are two drawings that also contribute to the theme. The phrase “work the steps or die” isn’t taken serious enough. *TS*

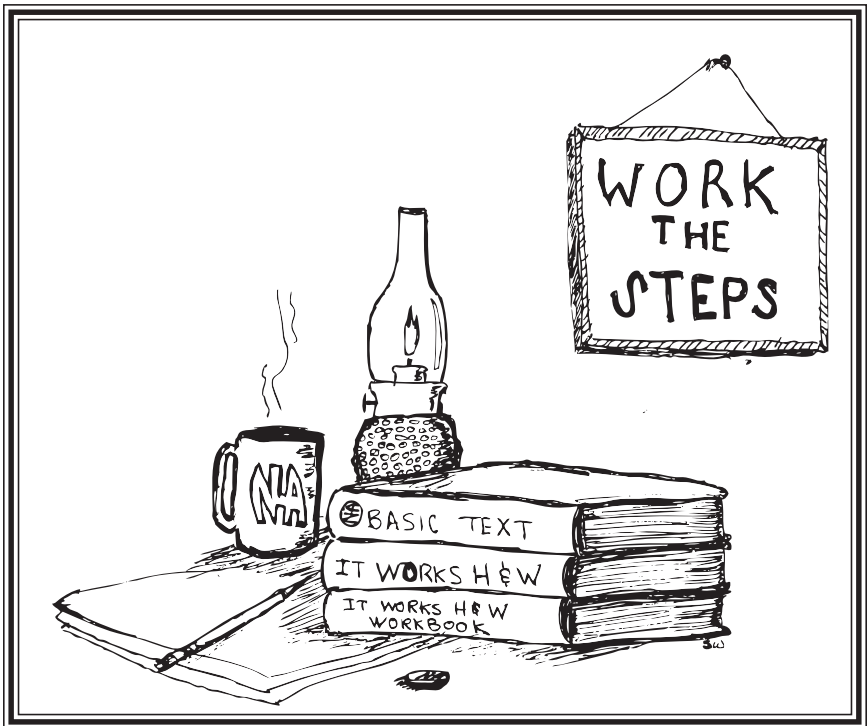
“There’s lots to like in Narcotics Anonymous. The meetings, for one, are great. We get to see our friends, hear some inspiring stories, share some practical experience, maybe even hook up with our sponsor. The campouts, the conventions, the dances are all wonderful, clean fun in the company of other recovering addicts. But the heart of our recovery program is the Twelve Steps—in fact, they *are* the program!

We’ve heard it said that we can’t stay clean by osmosis—in other words, we can’t just attend meetings, no matter how many, and expect to breath recovery in through the pores of our skin. Recovery, as another saying goes, is an inside job. And the tools we use in working that “inside job” are the Twelve Steps. Hearing endlessly about acceptance is one thing; working the First Step for ourselves is something very different. Stories about making amends may be inspiring, yet nothing will give us the freedom from remorse that taking the Ninth Step ourselves will give. The same applies to all Twelve Steps.

There’s much to appreciate about NA, but to get the most from our recovery we must work the Twelve Steps for ourselves.”

Recovery Artwork

“Step One” borrowed from the NA Way



“Work the Steps” by Scott W.

WORD SEARCH - see how many you can find!

F	D	X	S	N	O	I	T	I	D	A	R	T	Q	L		
S	A	T	T	I	T	U	D	E	S	B	N	M	U	S	CAMP	OUT
A	Z	I	V	E	B	M	L	K	I	L	S	Q	P	C	UNITY	
U	N	I	T	Y	R	B	A	V	Y	U	P	I	L	K	RELATIONSHIPS	
Q	C	M	L	H	P	U	U	R	W	S	H	Q	R	X	SPIRITUAL	
K	U	R	X	A	J	B	T	P	M	S	I	O	N	Q	SURRENDER	
M	W	A	I	G	N	L	I	E	N	D	W	G	L	T	FAITH	
E	C	I	V	R	E	S	R	O	P	P	M	J	R	R	FEAR	
I	M	G	R	O	M	S	I	F	E	P	N	Q	D	U	GRIEF	
A	N	Z	B	L	Y	T	P	T	D	J	I	S	E	S	GRATITUDE	
Q	O	L	T	D	A	J	S	P	O	N	S	O	R	T	EXPERIENCE	
A	I	H	E	L	C	L	C	M	T	E	A	L	P	H	ACTION	
C	T	A	E	X	P	E	R	I	E	N	C	E	A	U	ATTITUDES	
T	N	R	M	B	D	I	F	K	L	P	M	U	H	Q	TRUST	
I	E	W	J	I	P	E	L	M	N	A	T	U	V	B	SERVICE	
O	V	X	U	C	I	E	D	U	T	I	T	A	R	G	TRADITIONS	
N	N	A	L	R	N	J	S	Q	M	R	F	J	E	O	CONVENTION	
L	O	H	G	P	S	D	W	M	G	D	J	E	P	K	STEPWORK	
A	C	A	M	P	O	U	T	R	V	M	S	C	A	Q	SPONSOR	
A	K	C	Q	P	J	S	U	R	R	E	N	D	E	R		

LIFE IN RECOVERY



AROUND THE REGION

The inside cover hosts the “updated” flyer for our 30th anniversary Mid America Campout. I say updated because the original location which was mentioned here in the last issue was changed to Lucas Park - Wilson Lake. This happens to be my favorite lake so I will definitely see you there!

Since some of you are reading this while at MARCNA XXV I won't mention it, what? I just did? Anyway, start planning to attend MARCNA XXVI in Wichita, KS. March 20th-22nd, 2009.

Hospitals and Institutions have been pulling in each area's resources to work together. This region hosts 85-90 H&I meetings per month. It is their hope to host at least one learning day a year and put together a pamphlet listing all facilities with contact info., location, meeting time, etc. If you are an H&I kind of guy or girl ask yourself, “Do I have to take the meeting in?” or “Do I GET to take the meeting in?”

There has been talk of the Literature Committee disbanding and being replaced by a Newsletter Committee, with an ad-hoc committee handling any special review and input literature projects that come up. It seems the RCMs are divided on this issue so it will most likely remain a Literature Committee with a restructuring of the agenda and guidelines. More focus will be put on this publication in either case.

Outreach is requesting that if your group (within Mid America Region) is feeling isolated, please communicate your concerns, joys, and upcoming functions to the MAN. Scott W. would love to visit and share his Outreach ef-

In Public Information. the focus is on getting as many literature racks in facilities as possible plus using the area planning tool located in the Public Relations Handbook to educate and add more structure. One of their tasks is to produce the quarterly regional meeting list, the format being used to keep up-to-date is obtaining the information directly from our website www.marscna.com. Please make sure any and all changes to your area's meeting lists are sent in immediately. Each ASC should have a web contact person for this reason. The use of PSA's seem to raise questions and personally I don't see enough use of this valuable tool. Consistent workshops and learning days can benefit us all.

Here it is nearing the deadline (at the time of this printing) for members to get their votes and input on the Conference Agenda Report turned in to your GSR, RCM, or Regional Delegate. Rod and I have set April 15th as the deadline but please don't delay until then. Many of you have had workshops and some have just gathered together after a meeting or maybe out to coffee to give input. Whatever the method, the decisions being made at this year's conference have a great impact on our membership. I look forward to visiting with members while at MARCNA to answer any questions or just listen to your thoughts.

The Mid America Region has been established since 1979 - Many minutes, flyers, and newsletters have long since left Kansas or ended up in someone's basement. If YOU know of or have some of these early archives please help us complete our history in print Contact any person on the back page for more info.

Gates open at 6:00 PM Thursday

NO FISHING



Fires only in permanent fire rings

July 3rd-6th, 2008



"NO PETS ALLOWED!"

- Ⓝ Speaker Meetings
- Ⓝ Dances
- Ⓝ Fellowshiping
- Ⓝ Games
- Ⓝ Saturday Dinner Provided

**Lucas Park Group Park #104
Wilson Lake
Wilson, KS.**

Chair: John S. (785) 865-9999

Co-Chair: Russ P. (785) 589-0116

Treasurer: Janet W. (785) 827-8635

Secretary: Susie E. (316) 361-0300

Regional Delegate: Rod D. (620) 343-3149

Alt. Delegate: Tim S. (785) 819-4806

We can use all the bodies that wish to become involved in regional service. I've heard it said that the region doesn't do enough for the areas or the groups. The regional committee consists of members of the fellowship from our groups and areas. If more is to be done for the individual addict, the groups, and the areas at the regional level, more addicts need to become involved at this level.

*Thanks,
Kirk B.*

NEXT R.S.C.

Red Coach Inn - 2211 E. Kansas Ave. McPherson, KS.

All meetings are held in the Regency Rooms

Saturday May 17th, 2008

9:00 - 11:00 A.M.	Convention Campout
11:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.	Public Information Activities/Soul To Soul
1:00 - 2:00 P.M.	Lunch (open)
2:00 - 4:00 P.M.	Steering Outreach
4:00 - 6:00 P.M.	Literature Hospitals and Institutions
7:00 P.M.	Speaker Meeting
8:00 - 11:00 P.M.	Dance (Auction and Raffle included) \$3.00 person - no addict turned away

Sunday May 18th, 2008

8:00 A.M. - ??? **Regional Service Committee Meeting**