



Mid America Newsletter

The newsletter with the magazine feel



VOL. 44
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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. Our message is hope and the promise of freedom.”

Basic Text page 68

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.



From the Editor

Welcome to the fall edition of Mid America Region's newsletter! Thank you! Yes, you! I received more submissions than I could fit in this issue. I even removed the cartoon page for this one. Don't worry, I did leave the word-find toward the back for those that actually seek out the words (I do!).

The summer issue marked four years of fulfilling editor/publisher of this newsletter, and it hasn't been the first time serving a four year term, but this newsletter has been a passion of mine. Does anyone remember being passionate about service? After thirty-two years serving NA at the region level (and others) I have managed to keep my passion intact. Not to say I'm not tired most of the time and sometimes question my motives, but then I receive another miracle in my life and boom, I owe NA even more. Life on life's term has been a challenge this past quarter, with my wife spending most of it in a hospital bed, but once again you, the fellowship, showed up. Thank you.

Giving Back

So recently another request was put out by our MAN editor for article submissions to the newsletter. He has worked tirelessly to make sure that we have this newsletter every quarter. His position was up two years ago yet he has kept it going even though his position was up. It is constantly talked about the spirit of rotation but recently it appears that the same people are rotating the positions, or they just stay empty. Why is this? We have more people today in our fellowship than we have ever had yet we have many open positions in all levels of service. I see this in my home group and area both. And from talking with other addicts, it is that way in their groups and areas as well. When I got here service work was strongly encouraged by my home group members, by my sponsor and by the fellowship. Heck our medallion says "self, service, society, and God" on it—what this means to me is I need to dedicate ¼ of my life to each of these things to achieve balance in my recovery program. I understand service means a lot of things from pouring coffee, chairing a meeting, sponsoring people, opening a meeting, sitting on a committee, chairing a



committee. If we want NA services to continue, we need to step up and do our part. For those who may not know what some of the services are they are Public Relations- which let the public know who we are, what we are and where we are (this is how I found Narcotics Anonymous- thankful for that), H&I which was designed to carry the message into hospitals and institutions (for people who couldn't get to a meeting), to fellowship development or outreach which reaches out to struggling groups to help them be successful, to activities- which includes retreats, dances, conventions, campouts, game days and others within groups such as supplies chair who makes sure we have coffee, creamer, sugar and cups to name a few things, to literature chair that makes sure we have literature available for the newcomers and the old-timers and everyone in between. We even have a "key-chair" person at our homegroup which makes sure that our meetings have responsible addicts unlocking the door and making coffee. It's all important. I am not asking everyone to become a service junkie but is there something you can do to

give back to the fellowship that has given you this recovery life? "We only keep what we have by giving it away." That statement has had a great impact on me my whole time in Narcotics Anonymous. You don't have to chair a committee to be of service, but we do have to give back what was so freely given to us. Service work rocks. I know from serving at the convention how very full my heart is at the end of the weekend watching and listening to all the excitement from the addicts who attend it as well as from the committee members who worked hard to make it happen. It fills my bank every time!! Trust me when I say service is good for our soul and it has been wonderful for my recovery. Service is what taught me all about our traditions and concepts. So I am challenging you, my fellow brothers and sisters in recovery, to evaluate your time and see if you can give back to NA!!

Shelley W.

*Grateful
recovery
addict*



I Becomes We

When I arrived at NA broken and alone, I could not imagine life with or without drugs, I was at the end of the road.

Together we admitted we were powerless over our addiction and that our lives had become unmanageable, together we sought sanity, together we held each other up through life's stuff, together we recovered.

Without your warm hugs and understanding empathy I would not have made it this far. I am so grateful to NA and all of its member now and in the past for not only saving my life, but showing me a new way to live.

In turn I try everyday to hold another recovering addict in my hands in my heart.

Grateful in Recovery

Danita S. 12-05-00



NA means I'm not alone ever again, when I have problems, I can get answers from just listening to someone talk. I've gotten to know myself better, reconnected with my higher power that carries what I can't.

Dominic H.

clean date June 1,2015

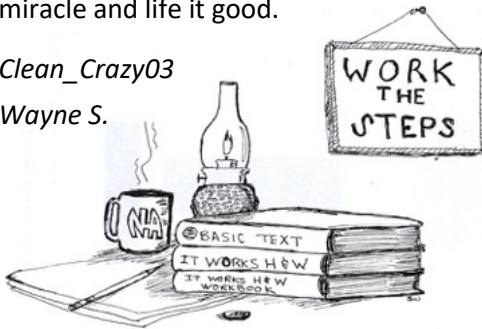
For the Newcomer

Ok, I still remember and never want to forget this moment in time. Yes, it was the last time I used a mind-altering substance, and the feelings I felt. There I was in my 6th term in prison, my 15th year. Mind you, prison was my safe place. So, there I was in the middle of the yard in focus of guards with a marijuana cig a person had, the wind was blowing, and the lighter was unable to light the substance. I tried and tried until it was gone, I remember feeling incomplete and the disease called to complete the task. We went in and got another and instead of going outside we used right inside. I didn't care who seen me or if I got caught, or maybe I wanted to get caught. Later that night I was pulled out of bed and drug screened, I was caught and rolled into solitary for 30 days. I remember getting the basic text and never letting it go. I read the book over and over and finally was able to hear what was being said in the text and began applying it in my life. I hit bottom that day in the yard, so many times I said I hit bottom only to use again. That day on 04/11/03 was my last usage, my clean day is 04/12/03, I have never had to go back to prison since. I know today that hitting bottom was an H/P thing and when I stopped looking for the bottom it happens. That is 3rd step stuff without me in control. Today I have 20 years clean, miracles

have happened without me knowing how or even questioning how. I am now happily married, retired, and raising my 2 grandchildren ages 8 and 9. My life is full of NA recovery. I remember as a newcomer thinking the wreckage of my past would keep me lost forever, well one day at a time it got better. Life in recovery is a miracle and life it good.

Clean_Crazy03

Wayne S.



Flowing in Recovery Through Changes

Since starting my recovery 17 years ago I have found that one thing is always constant and that is change. Our lives change in positive as well as negative ways. As recovering addicts it is our challenge to get through the changes we face while remaining drug free. I have recognized in past years that NA gives me the tools I need to make it through whatever life throws my way. It is however up to me to use those tools. One of the biggest tools I have found that have gotten me through times that I have felt tempted to use have been the members of NA that are my support

system. It may have taken me longer than it should have to say the least but realizing the importance of this being a “we” program and not an “I” program has made my life overall much happier and even simpler. Another tool that I believe is priceless is the NA literature. I can open it up and find something that will just click in my head and help me to move through another challenge. We as addicts have a simple program that if we are able to actually keep it simple, we can make it through another day clean.

Rich A.



FRIENDSHIP

When I entered the program, I had given up all my so-called friends. I had no one to turn to, to talk, laugh, or cry with. I thought that I was alone.

Now with just over a year in I have people who I can share the good times as well as the bad times with, but who also accepts me for me. They jump my case when I am messing up, and they help and share my ups and downs . They like me for me and I them for them.

We don't use one another; we enjoy one another. The people in the groups that I attend are my good

friends which my Higher Power has put into my life for one another to not only to share our experience, strength and hope with; but to talk, laugh, and enjoy being with. These people I call my friends.



Etiquette of the old school

I was sitting in a group just before the meeting started the other night, quietly observing the passing parade, reminiscing over what it was like when I first came to NA all those years ago. It was a big meeting this particular night. Throughout the meeting there were amazing pearls of recovery wisdom shared, and many a warm cascade of laughter – all lightly spiced with plenty of distractions. I sometimes react to (or, indeed cause) some of these distractions, depending on “where I’m at” at the time.

As I pondered this, the voice of my first sponsor burst into my conscience (as it often does). He was probably the most profound teacher I’ve ever had. He was from the “old school”, and that’s one reason why I chose him. He was as steady as a rock and would often share about the message handed down to him from his sponsor, who was many years clean at the time. I recalled his

tales of meeting etiquette. These are things I try my best to stick by today, as I did back then.

In the beginning I mainly followed these guidelines because I was terrified of getting in trouble. Today I try to adhere to them because I want to, and I know it works. The truth is I would (and still frequently do) break at least one of them at nearly every meeting. There is always something to work on in recovery! Always with a focus on the newcomer, and in line with unity and respect to our common welfare, this is what they taught me along with some I have learned since.

1 We are clean (free from contamination), not sober (quiet, solemn, somber, and moderate in the use of alcohol).

2 Go to the bathroom before the meeting. Be seated in the meeting, with your drink, before the meeting starts. Don’t come into the meeting late and act like a debutante, greeting your friends. Respect the meeting enough to get there on time and stay in your seat until the end. Sit down and listen so you can learn.

3 Share if you need to, even if you feel like you’re going to die and can only introduce yourself or speak just a sentence. Sharing when you’re scared gives others the courage to do it, too! Share your own experience, strength, and hope, don’t preach!

4 If you really need to talk to your neighbor during the meeting, whisper really quietly. (Remember how you felt when you were new and people were whispering?) Do you interrupt the meeting/speaker with chatter? Do you listen to the readings, or do you “tune out,” maybe even start talking? Do you listen to the NA announcements, even if you’ve heard the same one ten times? Do you give others the same attention and respect that you believe you deserve? Do you shout out your own additions to the steps or traditions readings?

5 When the collection for the Seventh Tradition begins, is this an important part of the meeting for you or a cue to start talking to your friends? Picture this: A newcomer hears the chairperson say, “We have no dues or fees . . .” but misses the rest because the room breaks into conversation. Meanwhile, he/she sees people putting money in the basket and passing it around the room. What would you think?

6 Respect the room you are in by paying attention to the meeting. Don’t leave the meeting until the end unless you really must – and if you do, never get up while someone is sharing (especially a newcomer, as they may personalize it). Always wait until the person sharing has finished; nothing is that important! When coming back into a meeting or arriving late, stand at the back (or just

inside the room) until the speaker finishes and then take your seat. It’s just good manners.

7 (Smokers only) Is having a cigarette break so important that you interrupt the meeting to have it? Do you ever miss part of the meeting because of it? Do you honor the Facility’s requests about where smoking is allowed? Do you pick up the butts or just throw them down?

8 We have lost places to hold meetings and functions due to not following and honoring the facilities guidelines. When we clean up our mess and take responsibility for ourselves, we demonstrate our recovery. In our reading, “Why Are We Here”, we say, “Through our inability to take personal responsibility, we were actually creating our own problems.” Many years into recovery we may see this pattern repeat. The solution is described by the problem – taking personal responsibility frees us and opens us to alternatives and choices we may never have imagined.

9 Texting and playing games on the phone is not the most respectful thing to do while someone is sharing.

10 Be of service, don’t be a taker, be generous. Greet the newcomer because someone greeted you when you got here. Is your meeting facility as clean after the meeting as it was before?

Do you know where the mop and/or broom is? Have you ever used them? Have you taken the trash out or picked up cigarette butts or trash? If not, why not? What are you doing to make the meetings you attend better than they would be without you?

11 Meetings are not a place to “hook up”. The measure of a person isn’t how many people you can “get with” it’s how many you can “leave be”, otherwise you are interrupting their recovery. Does that hurt your feelings? It’s called pulling your covers; we love you too much to pretend it is alright.

12 No, you can’t give up a service commitment just because you don’t feel like doing it anymore. It isn’t going to hurt you; however, it may help you learn how to live clean. If you think these suggestions don’t apply to you like they do others, get over it!

Just like recovery itself, being complacent about our meetings can be a very dangerous thing. It has been sad to see meetings close and lose places to hold functions over the years in this area for no other reason than lack of meeting/function etiquette. It is our duty to provide the best meetings we can, both for ourselves and for the addict who will be arriving later today, tomorrow, or the next day.

Sounds pretty full on, right? This is my predecessors’ – and now my – experience with caring and sharing the NA way, and it works. They were always clear that these were suggestions; take them or leave them. They would always remind me, however, that when jumping out of a plane, pulling the parachute ripcord is also only a suggestion, and suggestions like that are usually on the money!

Place of Dark Despair

(to the tune of "House of the Rising Sun")

There is a place of dark despair
My mind too often goes
Where out my spirit hope serene
Like crimson life-blood flows

A child pure and innocent
I was so long ago
No care had I save dance and song
No pain did ere I know

I grew to full and stood aloft
The world within my hand
Then lust for pleasures of mind and
flesh
Brought low my ambition grand

I fell from life on Easy Street
Descended into ruin
As powerless over drink and smoke
As over needle and spoon

My life became a tangled web
Of lies deceit and shame
I was left an empty soul
With naught but self to blame

By Grace I found a fellowship
Of addicts just like me
A crucial choice I've now to make
'tis death or recovery

It's a losin' crapshoot
Goin back out again
I get one roll and I bet my soul
And I win if I roll thirteen

Ed B.

www.marscna.net/events

To get the latest information on dances, workshops, or other NA events within this region please visit the address above. Also check the various closed or private Facebook pages associated with Mid-America Region, the groups and area members.

Soul to Soul Spiritual Retreat October 20-22, 2023

Registration ends August 20th!





Contact Mid America Region

- ◇ **Calendar and General:** info@marscna.net
- ◇ **Send Reports:** reports@marscna.net
- ◇ **Facilitator:** facilitator@marscna.net
- ◇ **Regional Delegate:** delegate@marscna.net
- ◇ **Region Campout:** campout@marscna.net
- ◇ **Region Convention (MARCNA):** convention@marscna.net
- ◇ **Region Spiritual Retreat:** soultosoul@marscna.net
- ◇ **H&I:** hospitalsandinstitutions@marscna.net
- ◇ **PR:** publicrelations@marscna.net
- ◇ **Phoneline:** phoneline@marscna.net
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- ◇ **Archivist:** archivist@marscna.net
- ◇ **Newsletter:** newsletter@marscna.net

Mid-America Regional Service Committee

P.O. Box 3534

Salina, KS 67402-3534

**Mid-America Regional Service Committee
November 2023 Quarterly Meeting**

Tentative schedule—check for hybrid meeting status

310 Swedonia St. Marquette, KS

***Subcommittee Meetings
Saturday November 18th, 2023***

10:00 am - 12:00 pm Fellowship Development
(Events, MAN, Literature, Soul to Soul)

12—1:30 pm Lunch *(on own)*

1:30—3:30 pm Convention/Campout

3:45 - 5:45 pm Public Relations
(H&I, Web, Phone-line, Communications)

TBA Evening Activity—Speaker, Fundraiser, Fellowship

*All times tentative,
please email: fellowshipdevelopment@marscna.net
if you have questions*



***Regional Service Committee Meeting
Sunday November 19th, 2023***

9:00 am - ? Reports, Open Forum, General Business, Funds