



Mid America Newsletter



The newsletter with the magazine feel

VOL. 44
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SUMMER
2023



“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.



CUT THE STRINGS

From the Editor

Complacency

Welcome to the summer edition of Mid America Region's newsletter! Some of you are reading this while at MARCNA XXXVIII, as it was in your registration packet, others are reading this online or maybe at your home group. Wherever you are, please consider sharing your experience, strength, and hope with us, we would love to have your writings published here for others to benefit from.

Back to the region's convention, when I had a few months clean I attended an NA street dance in Wichita and won a free registration to the next year's convention during a raffle. My girlfriend scraped up the money to register herself so we both could go. This was 1989 and the 1990 convention was MARCNA VII in Great Bend, KS. My girlfriend became my wife, and neither of us has missed one since, though some years we were so broke we couldn't stay at the hotel. I have served on eight MARCNA committees over the years, and continue to share our history in the archive room. Miracles do happen in this fellowship, I can testify to that.

Early in recovery, I was full of energy, full of emotion, and full of passion toward Narcotics Anonymous and my new way of life. I was rarely bored and discovered what "fun" truly was, "fun" like meeting new friends after a meeting for coffee, standing in a warm summer rain, or maybe playing softball at an NA campout (something I miss). I took advantage of every waking moment.

I also remember coming out of treatment having worked steps one through five thinking, maybe I can take a break before starting on step six. I ended up doing another fourth and fifth outside treatment, before moving on, but that thought stayed with me. Then one day I went to a meeting and one of the long-timers shared about complacency, a word I had never heard before. It says in our Basic Text that "Once we find the NA Way, boredom and complacency have no place in our new life.", so I had to look up that word in the dictionary something I had to do for quite a few words in our literature to start to get an understanding. One of the definitions is "A feeling of quiet pleasure or security, often while unaware of some potential danger, defect, or the like." Going back to our Basic Text, it also says "As our lives become more comfortable, many of us lapse into spiritual complacency, and risking relapse, we find ourselves



in the same horror and loss of purpose from which we have been given a daily reprieve.” That is something I don’t want in my life.

One thing we know about complacency, is that we rarely recognize it when we’re in it. I mean, we’re content, life seems to be going smoothly, who want’s to mess with that? I have found that a daily tenth step helps, as does being around other members on a regular basis. Others often see what we can’t see in ourselves. It says in our book *Living Clean*, “Complacency lies in the gulf between desperation and passion”. I know desperation, it fueled my willingness to do step work and change...everything. I also know passion, service work, our literature, life in general. Over the years, desperation became a distant memory and passion has leveled out. Isn’t that the gulf?

Some synonyms for complacency are prideful, egotistic, and self-centered. I need to remain humble at all times. It says in *Living Clean* that there are some signs that help distinguish serenity from complacency: when we get judgmental, ungrateful, and agitated, we’re probably on the wrong side.

Another quote from *Living Clean* is “Celebrations can propel us out of complacency, and many members find that a good convention or retreat can get the gratitude flowing again.” Some members are reading this while at MARCNA in

Wichita, what a great way to get excited about the NA Way of life all over again. Today I am grateful, for the people I’m surrounded around, our literature, service work, and many things too numerous to mention. I am passionate about life on life’s terms.

Anonymous



Reflection Of The Spirit

The 2023 convention theme is “Reflection of the Spirit.” I was able to attend another convention the last weekend of February in Omaha Nebraska and I heard one of the speakers talking about the “reflection in the mirror” and I thought how often I had struggled with that reflection looking back at me over the years, how often I have struggled at times to be spiritual, how often I was unable to connect with others outside my “circle”, then I started thinking about what does reflection of the spirit mean?

There are many definitions to reflection in the dictionary but this one stood out to me, “serious thought or consideration” and I thought to myself, what does my spirit reflect to others and to myself. Do I spend time really looking at my reflection and being kind to myself so I can be kind to others? Allow my spirit to

connect to another's spirit. Do I live a life today that I have given serious thought about?

I have the capability of being kind, even when I'm hurting, even when I'm tired, even when I don't like a personality but do I do it? That is the question that I need to answer. Through the process of having a sponsor, working steps, traditions, and being of service I know that I have the capability to do this with an honest effort daily. I want to be that reflection that is attractive to others. I want others to see their own reflections, their own goodness, their own kindness to share their reflection.

So even though the theme of the convention this year is not in the literature it is a way for me and hopefully others to ponder just exactly how they want their spirit to be reflected. May my spirit touch at least one other spirit today because something else I know is that behaviors in recovery often has a domino effect! And we can make it a positive one!

So I hope everyone gets their spirit filled at this year's convention and leaves knowing they are worthy, they are loved, they deserve recovery and they are a reflection to others.

Shelley W.
2023 MARCNA convention chair



To Reflect

To reflect is to look back, for many people. For others it is looking forward. For me it has been both this past year. I've had opportunities, through service, to look forward as well as look back. Soon after joining the committee for MARCNA 38, I experienced feelings of both excitement and dread. This was not my first time serving on a convention subcommittee. I remembered all the work and stress, as well as the excitement, joy, and feelings of gratitude. My spirit had been filled and renewed at the conclusion of each convention.

Some of my first thoughts were "I'm not so young anymore. Can I keep up?". I decided what I didn't have in stamina could maybe be made up with experience. I still have something to contribute. Memories of years past reminded me that what I couldn't do alone, WE could do together. How it takes all of us to brainstorm, create, problem solve, and execute to put on a function like this. During this process I've developed some lifelong friendships. I'm reminded how important it is to get out of my comfort zone and volunteer. We all have something to share.

The rewards far exceed the work and time put in for something like this. Not only do I get to know new addicts but also re-establish old ties. The planning takes on a personality of its own., Some meetings are light and jovial while others are serious and

conflicting. Of course, I prefer when we all come to a solution or compromise. It really is principles before personalities. Without all our spirits coming together we could not host a convention.

What will I come away from this year's convention, MARCNA 38 with? My hope is for exuberant Bliss! As I reflect on my memories from this weekend they will be filled with an abundance of love, energy, new ideas, and gratitude. The glow will show through my thoughts, works, and attitude. I will share my energized recovery in meetings, with newcomers, sponsees, and my sponsor. My Spirit will be reflected in the most attractive way. The N.A. Way!

Grateful to be a part of,
Carla D.

Flashback NA Way Magazine

Is It Service Work or Politics?

As I was talking with a friend, the conversation turned to certain personalities involved in service work. I still have the character defect of judging people who think they are in control or love to stir up controversy.

Our conversation ended with my saying, "It's all politics" a phrase I've heard a lot in the service structure. It struck me as odd that recovering addicts who devote their life to helping carry the message, as I like to believe I have done, can one minute be

trusted servants and the next minute be political leaders. I don't need to like, or even understand, other people's opinions or views to accept them. Today, I welcome and learn from other addicts' freedom of expression and practice this principle in my own recovery. Though I may not please everybody (thank God!), I hope I will reach somebody. "Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities".

Tim S, Kansas

First published April 1993 NA Way

The Thirteenth Tradition

Bigger is better. Medium promotes meaning. Little seems more loving. Do huge groups appear cold and turn into quick handshakes and an exit at the meeting's end? Do medium-sized groups dilute closeness so that no one feels connected., thus killing the homegroup concept? Do small groups get sick, breathing their own fetid air beneath a bell jar?

The answer may be found in an unofficial offering of the Thirteenth Tradition: Each group should be right-sized to meet the needs of its members, newcomers, and visitors who arrive at its door. During my early recovery in central Oklahoma, I wanted Narcotics Anonymous

meetings to be huge so we could catch up to and overcome Alcoholics Anonymous. I wanted hundred-member groups whose size could verify that NA was not a second-class program, that NA was not a "supplement to the real program of AA," which some members mumbled when NA came to my hometown in 1985.

Thank goodness my attitude changed. I came to believe that NA does not need to overcome any fellowship. It will last if it's meant to be. However, we did have meetings where sixty to seventy addicts packed our small meeting hall, which was formerly a print shop. We knocked out a wall to create more space and we jammed ourselves in, becoming red-eyed from great clouds of cigarette smoke. Our skin baked from lack of air-conditioning, but we were happy, knowing that NA was working for the first time in our town. The group was right-sized for that stage. Founding members remained busy sponsoring everyone, and newcomers were amazed that a thing like NA existed. Visitors were always welcomed with a dozen hugs. The newness wore off and we found our meetings becoming medium sized. About twenty to thirty addicts would gather, with the chairperson asking members to limit their sharing to three minutes so all could speak. Usually no one observed the request, but no one really cared, especially the group's founders. Finally, they

could relax and not have to carry the meeting with their sharing. They also could serve less at various trusted servant positions now that a pool of trusted servants existed.

The group was right-sized in that it allowed stability and history. Members got what they needed.

The next phase brought the little meeting, which was a welcome event. Now core members knew the group was more stable and they enjoyed relaxing in smaller meetings, perhaps at noon or during a candle-light session. In these types of meetings there was less smoke, more sharing time, and less formality. Members seemed to share situations that might not surface during medium or huge meetings. Four or five members around a beaten, wooden table on a frosty winter's night always brings me fond memories of closeness, warmth, and trust.

In retrospect, I can see that our group's size generally adjusted to the right dimension for its development and its NA population. However, I have noticed some groups get big and cold while medium groups forget their meaning. Little groups can become closed and arrogant. The groups and their members

become settled-stuck. They forget the group's main purpose is to create a place where crazy, confused addicts can duck their heads into the door and decide if they want this deal.

Maybe it is not the group's size. I have seen newcomers and visitors

not welcomed with a hug or a greeting at groups of all dimensions. Maybe it is the membership of the group. Maybe we (including myself) experience fear. I see an addict arrive at my home group and I sometimes think, "It's not my job to say hello to the addict." Whose job is it? I used to want all of our meetings to be mammoth; I now find myself seeking smaller meetings, with less structure. However, given enough time I will search for a medium-sized meeting to hear addicts who may have more experience than I do and who add to my choices in living clean.

Nothing can replace a mega-meeting where five hundred addicts get together at a camp-out to hear a speaker. The clean-time countdowns at these gatherings are tremendous. Yet each group should be right-sized to meet the needs of its members at any time. Consequently, whether we like it or not, the group size and its members orient, shape, and offer new members their first impression of NA. I hope we can remember to say hello to each other when we attend meetings—no matter what our size. I hope I can be aware of my group's size and purpose—to make this thing new each time we meet.

Omer G, Oklahoma

First published April 1994 NA Way—

Omer G. was a good friend of mine and was passionate about NA and our literature. His life was cut too short in 2012.

TS



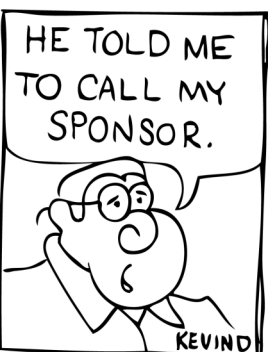
GRATITUDE

"My gratitude speaks when I care and when I share with others the NA Way". Today I am recovering from my disease of addiction with the help of NA. Just the other day I was walking across campus, with the trees with new green leaves and blossoms, when I felt in my gut that if I had continued to use, I would be dead today. I truly am living on borrowed time.

I was at a workshop last week and the last session was around table discussion on the twelve steps. I was very tired when I shared. I talked about still having a spiritual awakening, of being increasingly aware of the world around me and all its beauty. Then I talked about the other people in the program and how through them I'm finding myself. The love of the people in the program has melted the walls of my self-made prison. I'm being set free. This program has given me more than I dreamed or hoped for. And then I cried, not tears of sorrow, tears of gratitude.



LIFE IN RECOVERY



Humor Me

Just drive around MANHATTAN.
I'm gonna share my 5th Step with you!

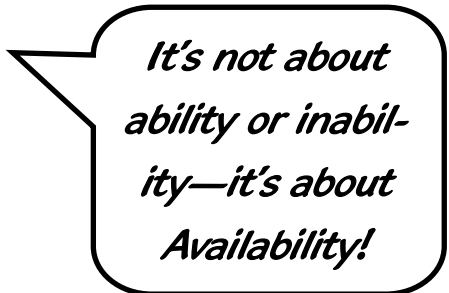
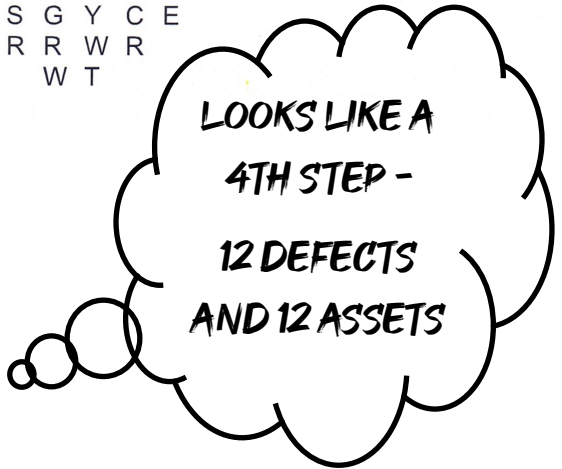


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- REMORSE
- GUILT
- RELAPSE
- ANGER
- EGOTISM
- DENIAL
- PRIDE
- ISOLATION
- RESERVATIONS
- RESENTMENTS
- ANXIETY
- COMPLACENCY
- AWAKENINGS
- HUMOR
- PARTICIPATION
- JOY
- SERVICE
- HOPE
- FAITH
- LOVE
- MEETINGS
- GRATITUDE
- EMPATHY
- FEARLESS



Can you find these 24 words?



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.

Longest running free campout in the world



Mid America Region Campout
June 30- July 2, 2023

Wolf Creek Camp - Pomona Lake, KS



Contact Mid America Region

- ◇ **Calendar and General:** info@marscna.net
- ◇ **Send Reports:** reports@marscna.net
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- ◇ **Region Campout:** campout@marscna.net
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Mid-America Regional Service Committee

P.O. Box 3534

Salina, KS 67402-3534

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

Tentative schedule

310 Swedonia St. Marquette, KS

**Subcommittee Meetings
Saturday August 19th, 2023**

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

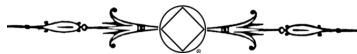
12—1:30 pm Lunch *(on own)*

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 August 20th, 2023**

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