

Suncoast Area Narcotics Anonymous Newsletter February, March & April 2011



The Message of Narcotics Anonymous

“An addict, any addict can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use and find a new way to live.”

NA's Basic Suggestions

- Attend 90 Meetings in 90 Days
- Get a Home Group
- Get a Sponsor and work the 12 Steps
- Change People, Places & Things
- Call Other Recovering Addicts Daily
- Don't Use No Matter What
- Read NA Literature

Suncoast Area 24 hour NA Helpline:

Find a meeting, talk to another recovering addict:
(941) 257-5055

*Check out our new website design.
Kudos to Richard for a great job.*

Suncoast Area Website:

www.suncoastna.org

NA World Services Website:

www.na.org

Newsletter Contact:

Please forward contributions to: News@suncoastna.org
and complete the

Submission Release Form located at:

www.suncoastna.org/newslettercommittee

The opinions expressed herein are those of the individual contributors, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Newsletter or NA as a whole. We welcome any feedback in accordance with the Second Tradition. Please indicate if you would like that feedback published.

Open Positions with FDC

The following positions are open for the 2010/2011 service year:

- **Public Relations Coordinator**

Interested parties should attend the FDC meeting at 2 pm at Whitfield Presbyterian Church, 7045 North Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, second Sunday of each month and also the Area Service Committee meeting at 4 pm the same time and location, following the FDC meeting. (NA is not affiliated with any Meeting Facility)

THE TRIANGLE OF SELF OBSESSION: Anger, Fear and Resentment.

Fear comes from the unknown. I learned that early on. The more I understood and knew about a thing the less fear was connected to it. I have lots of examples of that. The first time I saw an earwig it scared me. It was, to me, so ugly and unknown; I guess I had lots of 'what if's' going through my head. But when I looked it up in the bug book and learned about it's habits and motivations, I was no longer afraid of it. Before I had my first daughter I was afraid. But I must have read four books and every article I could find on giving birth. When I truly understood the process and what exactly was happening to the body and why, the fear was gone. It was no longer a fear of the unknown. I understood, there was no longer fear of pain and it was not too much to bear. These things taught me where fear comes from.

The Basic Text tells us that self obsession is at the core of our disease, that an addict hasn't learned to transition from all basic needs being met to acceptance of what is and going within to find happiness.

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From the Editor: Newsletter name and logo change?

This is the origin of our current newsletter name: Ducks in the Attic

I used to spend a lot of time watching ducks. Most of the time, they are calm and serene, floating in the water and going about their lives. Then on occasion, one of the ducks will get agitated; flapping, quacking and racing around in circles.

The rest of the flock will follow in the madness and attack the agitated duck and chase it across the water.

After a few minutes, the duck and the rest of the flock will stop agitating and settle back down to their normal, calm existence.

Likewise, we, as addicts, get serenity from rigorously working the Steps and the various aspects of our program that allow us to fit back into our flock; the Fellowship, our families and society.

But, insanity sometimes returns and we too can get agitated and go crazy. If we have a program, we apply the principles and the tools that allow us to return to sanity.

It's as if we have a flock of ducks in our head: **Ducks in the Attic.**

Tony C.

One Single Point of Light

Pt. 1

Neil M.

The sun sets and the night creeps in a cool mellow comfort that I used to long for
But I never truly appreciated it the way that I do now
Summers used to burn so hot and bright that I never wanted to see the sun
The Fall came, it passed and the Winter took hold for just a day or two
As the Spring opened it's beautiful shining wings, my despair kept me hidden away in the abysmal dark
It was always this way. For as long as I could remember.
Craving no less than an end to this miserable existence,
I hid to rot away from all salvation, to fade away within my own pale, miserable soulless shell.
But just when it seemed that all light was gone, and the end of days had come,
Somehow, a tiny ray of light forced its way into my dwelling place
My first reaction to this unwelcome visitor was to cry out, "Go Away, Leave Me Alone!"
The stream of light, which was no wider than the tip of a pin,
continued to shine through a small crack in my wall.
Who would have thought that a such a tiny ray of light could cause my eyes such pain.
I would look at it for just a moment, then have to turn away
There was something very strange about this ray of light
It was so small, yet burned so bright.
At first I detested it. It was different, it made me uncomfortable, I didn't understand it
and I didn't want to understand it.
It became so bright that I could slowly start to see myself.
At first I was disgusted. At first I was ashamed.
I continued to look at myself, but as I was repulsed by my outer appearance,
I was not aware that the warmth from the light was changing me on the inside...

Cont. from page 1 When we are angry what we really are is angry that someone or something outside ourselves has not met our demands, our expectations. And resentments come from our expectations that someone else must fulfill our basic needs. We begin life just as the non-addict, all our basic needs being met. But the non-addict grows and learns to care for himself, accepting life as it is and dealing with things as they come along. An addict, and not all addicts have found a program, has never learned to deal with the world around him. Fears are clouded in mystery, anger that we aren't getting what we want, the way we want it, still expecting to have our needs and desires met by a force outside ourselves and resentments the world hasn't recognized our importance and that we deserve to have all our needs met whether we've expressed that need or not.

We are selfish people. NA teaches us to care for and about others, the tools of the program, the Basic Text and Spiritual Principles teach us to care for and about others. We offer ourselves to the newcomer with honest caring. We humbly ask for help and have the willingness to learn and try a new way of life. This is the road out of self-obsession. We learn to turn fear of the future into faith that a loving higher power, our sponsors and the friends we've made in NA will guide us. We learn to turn anger into love and resentments into acceptance of ourselves and others.

THANK YOU, NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS.

SANDY 

Etiquette of the old school

I was sitting in my home 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, with over 80 members in attendance. 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 react to (or, indeed, sometimes cause) these distractions, depending on “where I’m at” at the time.

As I pondered this, the booming 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 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 20 years clean at the time. They both, in turn, talked about my sponsor’s sponsor with an almost reverent tone and regularly referred to the grandfather of all their sponsors who had departed clean many years ago.

I recalled his tales of meeting etiquette. These are things that 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 do it because I want to, and I know it works. The truth is that I would break at least one of them 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 for our common welfare, this is what they taught me (with one new one, to bring things up to date):

- ☑ Be seated in the meeting, with your coffee, before the meeting starts.
- ☑ Don’t leave the meeting until the end unless you really have to—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 until the speaker finishes and *then* take your seat.
- ☑ Share if you’re asked, even if you feel like you’re going to die and can only say a sentence. Sharing when you’re scared gives others the courage to do it, too!
- ☑ 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?)
- ☑ Texting and playing games on the mobile is not the most respectful thing to do while someone is sharing

And then there’s the old-school etiquette for those times you’re “in the chair” (leading or chairing):

- ☑ Always get a strong, positive speaker to open the sharing part of the meeting.
- ☑ Ask if there is anyone there for their first NA meeting and whether they’d like to say their first name (most people at their first meeting don’t know what it means to “identify” or “ID”).
- ☑ Ask if there are visitors from out of town, and ask them to share during the course of the meeting. Visitors generally have something new to offer, and being able to share while away from home helps them connect.
- ☑ When possible, alternate between calling on male and female members to share.
- ☑ Ask someone you don’t know if they’d like to share.
- ☑ Ask the person for whom you have the biggest resentment to share; it builds character!
- ☑ Remember principles before personalities. Don’t ask only your friends to share.
- ☑ Ask the person with the most cleantime or strongest message to close the meeting.

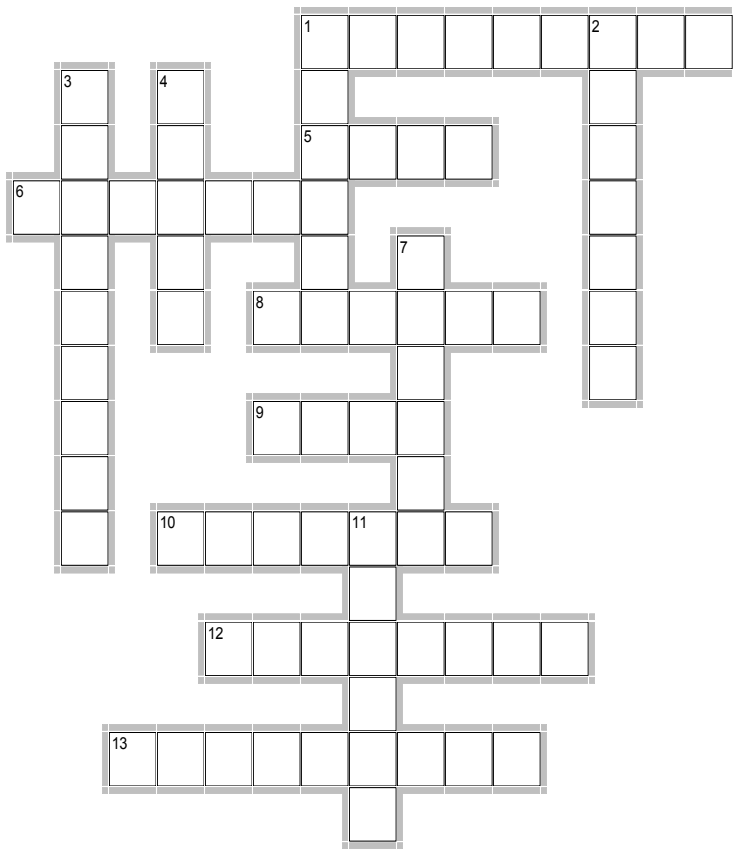
Sounds pretty full on, right? This is my predecessors’—and now my—experience with caring and sharing the NA way, and it works.

They were always clear that these are 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 are like that usually on the money!

I now have sponsees who sponsor members, who sponsor still others. We know it as the sponsorship chain, and often refer to the members in that chain with family names such as recovery brother, grand-sponsor, and so on. This is an incredible resource. Many, many recovery challenges have been met with this gang. There is nothing that we can’t get through clean, together. We are still passing on the suggestions that were given to us and, just for today, we are staying clean and living productive lives within our fellowship and within our society. Awesome stuff!

Nathanael M, Gold Coast, Australia

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EclipseCrossword.com

Step 1 “We admitted that we were powerless over our addiction, that our lives had become unmanageable”

Across

1. ___ is a physical, mental and spiritual disease that affects every area of our lives.
5. Recovery doesn't exempt us from ___.
6. Our ___ is progressive, incurable and fatal.
8. Obsession is the never ending ___ of thoughts.
9. We realize that we cannot use drugs and ___.
10. ___ had to replace denial.
12. We are responsible for our ___.
13. When we admit we're ___, we never have to use again.

Down

1. In NA, we deal with every ___ of our addiction.
2. Compulsion is the irrational ___ to continue using.
3. The ___ part of our disease is our total self-centeredness.
4. In NA, staying ___ has to come first.
7. Victory lies in the admission of ___.
11. Long-lasting change in recovery happens ___.

(Answers on page 6)

**Clean Time Celebrations
February, March & April 2011**

For inclusions or corrections
Please e-mail news@suncoastNA.org

| | | | |
|-------------|------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| Andy B. | Call Group | 2 years | 2/1/2009 |
| Sharleen P. | Dily Fix | 3 years | 2/27/2008 |
| Steve R. | Friday Night Clean | 2 years | 2/21/2009 |
| Jim C. | More Gratitude Less Attitude | 16 years | February |
| Katrina G. | Women's Perspective | 1 year | 3/4/2010 |
| Robert Y. | Steps to Change | 6 years | 3/13/2005 |
| Steve E. | Wharf Rats | 15 years | 3/15/1996 |
| Laura L. | Recovery Ranch | 4 years | 3/22/2007 |
| Jon W. | Recovery Ranch | 3 years | 2/29/2008 |
| Neil M. | Friday Night Clean | 3 years | 3/30/2008 |
| Jim K | Time 4 Recovery | 4 years | 4/1/2007 |
| Jessica W. | Recovery Ranch | 3 years | 4/2/2008 |
| Richard G. | Wharf Rats | 17 years | 4/5/1994 |
| Jeff R. | Friday Night Clean | 5 years | 4/7/2006 |
| Roger R. | Friday Night Clean | 2 years | 4/10/2009 |
| Twitch | Daily Fix | 5 years | 4/14/2006 |
| Frankie C | Time 4 Recovery | 2 years | 4/14/2009 |
| Joe W. | Steps to Change | 27 years | 4/18/1984 |
| Kenny M. | 12 o'clock Clean | 6 years | 4/22/2005 |
| Hilda | Time 4 Recovery | 3 years | 4/24/2008 |
| Charlie D. | Tradition Twelve | 5 years | 4/28/2006 |
| Lisa C. | Wharf Rats | 3 years | 4/29/2008 |



Technology

I envy the modern day keyboard.

Constructed with two (2) little buttons that
the brain simply can not command.

If only, we were assembled in a factory.

If only, we were made in China.

If only, we had those two (2) little buttons.

Escape (ESC) and Control (CTRL)

Katrina G.

Dear Disease,

I hate you. I know you know that and I am glad that you do. I will not let you defeat me. Although you try your hardest, your best is not good enough.

You do not win over the weak. You may take hold of the one who does not know his Higher Power and if you succeed, at times we may give thanks because you have also succeeded in bringing that person one step further from you. So hahaha the joke is on you.

If you consume a soul and bring him to his death – you have not won for we know your game. You have only proven the fact behind your ugliness. We knew before you did that some will die, but many will live. So you see Disease, we are using you, you are not using us. It seems after all... I do not hate you.

Sincerely, *Tiffany C.*

Calling all artists!

**Do you think this newsletter needs a
new name and logo?**

**Please submit artwork and ideas to
news@suncoastna.org.**

and complete the **Submission Release Form** located at:
www.suncoastna.org/newslettercommittee

**We'll publish them in the next few
editions**

And vote to decide the favorite.

Help us be responsible caretakers of NA funds.

The Literature Committee is asking that unused meeting lists be returned to them for recycling. Also groups are asked to note on GSR reports how many new meeting lists they received and how many are unused at the end of the meeting list cycle (every two months).

This is an effort to determine whether we are printing too many lists and, if so, to cut down on waste and printing costs by printing less.

NA Way Magazine (The Official NA Newsletter) subscriptions update *reprinted with permission from The NA Way Magazine*

Some important *NA Way Magazine* subscription changes have been implemented. The October 2010 issue was the final automatic mailing from the then-existing database. Many of you have re-subscribed or e-subscribed, and we thank you for responding so quickly.

Individuals, groups, and service committees can receive electronic subscriptions, or paper subscriptions if they need them. We are trying to save NA funds wherever possible, and electronic subscriptions are a great way to do that, but we also realize that many people either do not have access to a computer or cannot navigate our site in English. We continue to translate the magazine into Farsi, French, German, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. Of course, we want to continue to communicate through *The NA Way Magazine*, but our economic reality is forcing us to find more cost effective ways to do so.

Subscribers who already have an e-subscription will continue to receive the magazine.

Those who have been receiving a paper copy must either e-subscribe or re-subscribe (choosing the paper version if they feel they need it). If an individual, group, service committee, or organization needs multiple paper copies, they can request a bulk subscription.

Access to both options is available at www.na.org/subscribe. Click on the multi-copy subscriptions link to request multiple-copy subscriptions or email fsmail@na.org.

We are asking members to remember that choosing the electronic subscription reduces distribution costs, saving fellowship funds for other uses. The e-version also offers access to additional content and features not available in the paper version.

All changes seem to have an adjustment period, and we are sure this one will be no different. Please share this information with others in your groups and service bodies.

Thanks for your help and for being a part of *The NA Way Magazine*. Many of the principles we learn in our recovery are reflected in this subscription change and in this issue: prudence, responsibility, self-acceptance, perseverance, and humility, to name just a few. *De J, Editor*



SUNCOAST AREA MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

For directions to meetings go to: www.suncoastna.org
Or call the NA Helpline (941) 257-5055
For meetings outside the Suncoast Area, go to: www.na.org
(NA is not affiliated with any meeting facility)



The Frontline Group

7:00 pm to 8:00 pm
501 17th Street West, Palmetto
Speaker Meeting on the Last Tuesday of the Month
March 29th Speaker Mackie A.
April 26th Speaker Jim K.

Recovery By The Books

meets Tuesday 7:30 pm to 8:30 pm
Bayshore Baptist Church
6502 14th Street West, Bradenton
(Closed - Alternates Weekly with Speaker/Ask It Basket)

Friday Night Clean

First Baptist Church in Bradenton,
will be having a speaker meeting the last
Friday of the month.

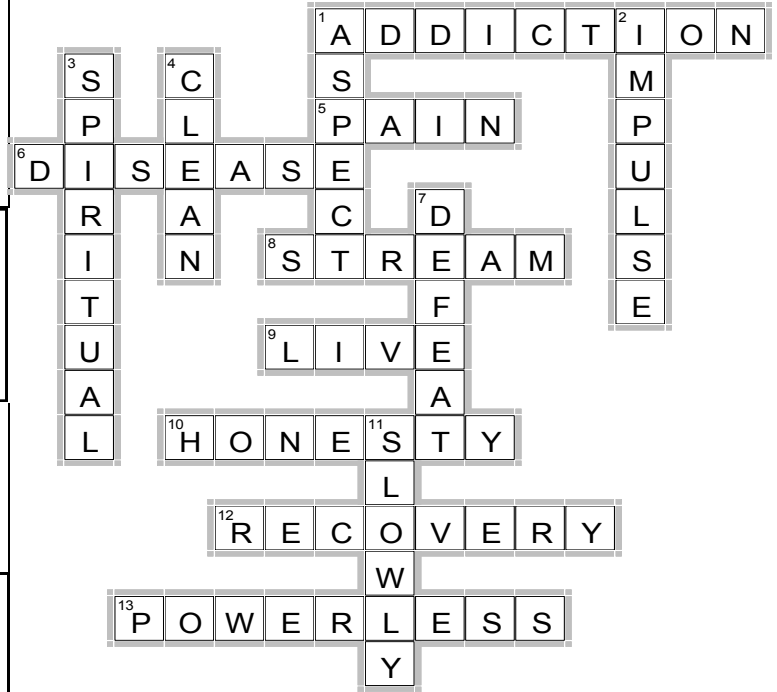
More Gratitude Less Attitude

Meets Monday thru Sunday, 6:15pm-7:15pm
Central Christian Church
926 15th Street West, Bradenton
"My Gratitude Speaks Dinner"
Second Tuesday of Every Month
Please Bring Your Favorite Nosh.
Dessert and Refreshments Provided.

Fellowship Development Committee ("FDC") meets

The 2nd Sunday of each month, from 2pm to 3:30pm
Whitfield Presbyterian Church,
7045 North Tamiami Trail, Sarasota

This newsletter is looking for submissions (articles, news, activities, etc.) and people to help out. Please contact News@suncoastna.org or come to FDC (See Above)
Get Involved!



EclipseCrossword.com

Bay Area Activities Presents: 8th Annual Leap of Faith Campout and Spiritual Retreat

March 4th, 5th, & 6th 2011

Limited cabins are available for \$50 each - sleeps 10 per cabin
Now accepting logo submissions that will be featured on a T-shirt and
other memorabilia until January 30th, 2011

Sponsored by: Bay Area Activities

Heard it in a meeting:

***"Keep your recovery first
to make it last."***

"Check yourself before you wreck yourself"

"What you hear here, stays here"

"Feelings don't change habits. Habits change feelings."

Please submit to: news@suncoastna.org