



Recovery Herald

DECISIONS; OH, DECISIONS!

When I first came into recovery, I could barely decide what to eat for breakfast, let alone crawl out of bed. Those first few months of recovery were rough. I had just admitted to being powerless over my addiction and my actions, and that the way I was living was insane during my using and up to the previous moment of clarity; which landed me flat on my ass in a Narcotics Anonymous meeting. I remember talking to my sponsor of what it was that I wanted in a Higher Power, and the concept of what that Higher Power meant to me. My problem seemed to be, at that point, that my own self-will had started to get in the way of attending meetings, reaching out, and actually communicating with this new-found idea of a Higher Power. I was terrified of making decisions-I had had so many wonderful ideas in the past that were propelled by riotous amounts of self will, and I always ended up alone and hopeless. The Third Step clearly states that "We made a decision..." Ok, well I have made lots of decisions that couldn't be too frightening. It was the second part of the step that has always been my saving grace and one of my biggest tools in my tool box "...To turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him." So the habit of running on self-will had to be squashed at this point. I had to come to the realization that the only way for me to be restored back to sanity was to allow my Higher Power to do its job. I see it

this way: when I was out there using and abusing, I thought I was the only thing in the universe that gave a darn about me; but all along I had this Higher Power trying to care and love me unconditionally. How else would I have made it to the rooms? It wasn't luck that brought me to recovery; it was my Higher Power. I would have to say from my own experience, that God was making decisions for me long before I ever made a conscious effort of actually allowing a loving Higher Power to care for me.

Narcotics Anonymous wasn't such a bad decision that my Higher Power made for me, so why was it so hard for me to decide to turn all my worries, problems, fears, and pain over to a Higher Power? Well, I call that giant mountain of anxiety my "shit blanket." It feels warm and squishy, and I'm comfortable in the chaos. It took rigorous amounts of effort, and it still does, to constantly make a decision to turn my will and my life over. But, I do it because I had just enough faith; which fueled just enough courage, and I gained just enough trust in my Higher Power. Today, my decision to constantly make an effort to turn my will and my life over to my Higher Power about absolutely anything affecting my serenity is still a choice, but I make that choice more often than not these days.

~ An Anonymous NA Member

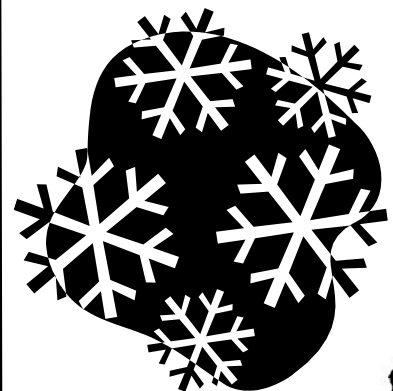


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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

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- Mock Group Support Forum





What's New?

Statewide:
1.866.258.6329
Anchorage:
1.907.277.5483
Fairbanks:
1.866.258.6329
Juneau:
1.866.258.6329
Kenai:
1.907.335.9456



Learning Day Workshop & Spaghetti Feed (free)

Come learn even more about service, play games for prizes, and eat some free spaghetti!

December 13th from 2:00pm-5:00pm, at the URS Club



Mock Group Support Forum

More details to come!

GSR's, and any other interested members of NA are asked to attend.

Sunday, Dec 21st from 5:30pm-7:00pm at the URS Club

“Our task is to fan the flame of desire, not dampen it. Any addict who walks into a meeting, even a using addict, displays a level of willingness that cannot be discounted.”

~ It Works, How and Why p. 145-146

DESIRE IS THE KEY

I have seen many addicts over the years come to meetings, but not stay clean. It's a hard road to watch because I understand and I feel their pain. The Third Tradition helps to keep our doors open to the still suffering addict. I know from personal experience that I constantly pray for the addict who still suffers to gain the desire needed to keep coming and hopefully stick around. I cannot place any judgment on someone else's level of desire to stay clean. There are no guarantees that one day I won't go back out; all I have is a daily reprieve. I can do what has been suggested; I reach out, I greet people, I give hugs, and I place no judgment on others. “Our task is to fan the flame of desire, not dampen it.” (pg. 145, It Works How and Why). When I step into a meeting of Narcotics Anonymous, my primary purpose is to affirm that I am an addict and that I have a desire to recover from the disease of addiction. That was a personal decision I had to make on my own accord. It took a while for me to realize I feel at home in Narcotics Anonymous, but I'm glad I did. I have to allow others the same courtesy.

The wording in the Third Tradition is written extremely broad (as is the First Tradition), so that addicts of all different shapes, sizes, and colors, and regardless of what drugs they used, can identify with NA. “The common denominator in NA is the disease of addiction. We are all equally subject to its devastation. We share an equal right to recovery.” (pg. 150, It Works How and Why).

This Tradition frees me from judgment, persecution, and “one-up-ism.” I am allowed to grow and to love the addict who suffers both inside and outside the rooms through compassion, understanding, anonymity, and fellowship. I'm grateful that the doors to the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous were opened to me, and that wonderful women loved me and taught me how to love myself and others. I am grateful for the desire to stay clean today and continually make a decision to be a member of Narcotics Anonymous.

STRESS

I was thinking about STRESS and how it manifests over our life span. In our younger years, it's "Oh my GOD, where are my crayons!" In our teenage years, it can be, "Oh my GOD I have SO much homework!" It goes on and on. As we grow up, many of us choose to go to college, get jobs, make a career for ourselves, meet someone special, have a family, etc. The STRESS that comes with those responsibilities is infinite. Some of us choose to take another path. Some of us didn't have a choice to begin with. Some of us just made a mistake and ended up living a different life style. A life style of a drug addict.

From a recovering drug addict's perspective, the responsibilities previously explained make me laugh and confuse me at the same time. When you are a drug addict, your STRESS mode reverts back to younger years: "Where the hell are my crayons?!"

Drug addicts are amazing at survival. We handle STRESS like champions. How? Easy...we completely disregard it! How will I hold a job? Maybe I will, maybe I won't. Not really on my top priority list. How am I going to pay rent? Not an issue, I'll just dip out unannounced, move, disappear, crash with a "friend," steal, lie, whatever. Pretty simple. How will I move? I have no freaking idea but I WILL make it happen. Not because I believe "GOD" will get me through it or because "what is meant to be will be," but because I will do whatever it takes to get what I want or what I need. I won't think of whom I will hurt or what type of consequences there will be, I won't even care. As long as I get and got what I need, I'm good. Survival of the fittest? Maybe. Survival of a drug addict? Probably.

In all reality the only STRESS I had was how, when and where can I get my next fix. Where will I get money? Wherever I can...lie, cheat, steal. One, if not all of those will do just fine. Literally no STRESS but "Where are my CRAYONS!!" (By crayons I mean drugs.) Once we are "IN" that mind set, everything we have learned, every life skill, every moral...EVERY honest behavior we have ever learned gets lost. Lost in a head that is so clouded we can't even begin to think about how to clear it out. We become stuck; we accept that this is the life we are going to live. We genuinely believe that this is it. This is my life. We have "acceptable" excuses such as "I never stood a chance" or "I was dealt a shitty hand"...so many untrue, unbelievably doubtful and seemingly undeniable excuses. Weak, defiant and hopeless reasons that only an addict would understand.

Going through life, society tries to prepare us for the STRESS of adulthood. Having a drug addiction sets us back...way back. When we "choose" to take the step into recovery, it is like putting the STRESS fit for an adult on to a child.

Slowly over time, with patience and VERY hard work, we manage to somehow get there. In my experience, I developed those "acceptable, responsible, productive member of society" requirements and decided to add a husband and a couple of kids to that "place" I worked so hard to get to. Throw in your friends, family and other relationships, add a couple adorable, needy dogs into the mix and you got yourself a fun filled, epic ball of STRESS!

However, it is an amazingly beautiful feeling. STRESS is a part of life. STRESS isn't the problem. How we deal with it is. We need to accept this lifelong characteristic and be thankful for it. If we don't have any STRESS in our life, in my humble opinion, we are a little careless. Our STRESS perception can be our solution. I went to the store by myself with a 5-year-old, a 3-year-old and a 9-month-old because we needed milk. I got home. I forgot the milk. I cried. I cried...and cried...and cried some more.

I didn't cry because I forgot the milk. I cried because as a result of my past, I internalized this and my mind ran with it. It became this giant cluster bunch of crazy, confusing, indescribable emotions. As a recovering drug addict in this situation, or any emotionally STRESS-filled predicament, you have to literally hold your head up, look in the mirror and say to yourself..."DUDE! LET. IT. GO. It's milk. It is JUST...MILK!"

At the end of the day be grateful for your STRESS. It is proof that you are living your life, not just existing.

Remember to cherish it, remember to say thank you for it...remember to love it.

~ Chelsea M., NA Member

WE MADE A
DECISION TO TURN
OUR WILL AND
OUR LIVES OVER
TO THE CARE OF
GOD AS WE
UNDERSTOOD HIM

Dear God,

First, I want to thank you, for helping me stay clean.
To not pick up, no matter what, with no in between.

For quieting the chattering that goes on in my mind.
For opening my eyes when I was spiritually blind.

I've now made this decision, to give my will and life to you.
Because, when left to my devices, I barely made it through.

I asked my sponsor, "What's God's will?" And the answer that I got,
When I'm just not certain what it is, I start with what it's NOT!

She explained that peaceful feeling, when everything feels ... okay.
When head and heart and stomach line up, that feels like the right way.

And when I'm just not sure, no matter what I do,
She said, sometimes doing nothing is really okay, too...

As long as I'm moving forward, and being present every day,
Working steps and praying, living life the NA way.

It's all starting to make sense, God, and I'm so grateful for all I've been
given.

I see you in my life today, and for You and Recovery, I'm driven.

And so I'll strive to do the next right thing, to remain teachable and
humble.

I can keep it if I give it away, please help me when I stumble.

Love, Tamera

*"Desire is not a measurable commodity.
It lives in the heart of each individual member."*

~ It Works, How and Why p. 144

Moments

My life is nothing more than a collection of moments. Moments of complete and utter desperation and moments that lift me so high, I fear the fall would kill me. Moments of such intense joy all I could do is cry, and moments of despair so great, I screamed, but no voice was heard. Moments of friendship and love, and moments of fear and loneliness only known by us. It is the moment that defines me. The moment tells my story. The moment is where I live, because that is all I have. A single moment in time. A single moment to act. A single moment to decide. Seize the moment; recover or die. This is how I live as an addict in recovery. A moment, an hour, a day at a time.

~ Michael O.

THE ONLY
REQUIREMENT
FOR MEMBERSHIP
IS THE DESIRE TO
STOP USING

BUSINESS MEETINGS

Area Meeting– First Saturday of the month at 5pm, URS Club

DHF- First Thursday of Month at 8pm, URS Club

Twisted Sisters– Last Sunday of the month at 3pm, URS Club

S.O.S.– Last Tuesday of the Month at 730pm, CPGH

It Works– As needed

This One– As needed

Clean Machine– Last Wednesday of Month at 8pm, CPGH

PJ Meeting– Last Saturday of the Month at 11am, URS Club

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

H&I (Hospitals & Institutions)– Last Thursday of the month at 815pm, URS Club

PR (Public Relations)- Last Sunday of the month at 530pm, URS Club

Activities– No meetings scheduled at this time.

Newsletter– Second Sunday of every month at 3pm, URS Club

How This “Area” Thing Works...

Many people don't know much about our local service area. Every year area roles and responsibilities are passed down so that every member is given the opportunity to serve at an area level. There is an executive body which consists of a chair person, vice chairperson, secretary, treasurer, regional committee member and alternate, and group service representatives. Then there is a service body which consists of public relations, hospitals and institutions, activities, literature, and the recovery herald.

It takes a lot of trusted servants to keep our area stocked with literature, schedules, phone lines, etc. Many people are unsure of how to start in the journey of service work. My first experience was at a group level. I committed to a home group; which I attended regularly. I showed up to a group business meeting and volunteered for a service position in the group. After I had a little clean-time, and had made an effort to be accountable, I tried for another group position. The point is, that I attended my home group's business meeting. I asked questions and was of service at a group level; which in turn I learned a little about our group, and the twelve traditions. Many people I know work their way toward being a GSR (group service representative). GSR's have the responsibility of carrying the group message, or conscience, back to the area level. Only GSR's vote at the area level because the area serves the groups, and each individual gets to vote at their home group. My point is; area cannot thrive without the group's support and recovering addicts interested in service at an area level. If you want to get involved with service work but don't know where to start, find a home group and make it a point to be informed of what's going on in your area by attending your home group meeting!!!

~ Heidi K., NA Member



2014 TRUSTED SERVANTS

Executive Committee

Chair: Enrique P.

Vice Chair: Amber B.

Treasurer: Desirea W.

Secretary: Jodi L.

RCM: Heidi K.

Alt. RCM: Vacant

Literature: Victoria L.

Alt. Literature: Libby

Subcommittee Chairs

H & I: Audrey B.

Activities: Cheyenne M.

PR: Lotus B.

Newsletter: Lotus B.

GSRs

DHF: Annette B.

It Works: Pedro M.

Clean Machine: Donna A.

Twisted Sisters: Tanya L.

PJ Meeting: Libby H.

This One: Jeff G.

SOS: Sandy E.

Toys in the Addict: Dano

Word Search Challenge

ENTER TO WIN!!!

Complete the word search including CHALLENGE words for a chance to win a PRIZE!

HINT: Answers can be found in Step Three and Tradition Three of It Works: How and Why.

Submit your completed word search in person to Lotus or via email to recoveryherald@gmail.com—you can scan it or simply take a picture!

All entries must be received by February 1st. Please be sure to include contact information so we can notify you if you win!

Name _____

Phone _____

A K L A U T I R I P S H S P Y I O C E I
 C E K L Z D Q L C X Q R K B N A O P C W
 C V P E T S T X N W E L Y B N M U N N U
 E O F J R C G O K W L W U L P Y E K A K
 P L D E I U I S O P V V U A R A C E R N
 T G Y D I T O P L F G J S Q J K I C E Q
 A G D D I L R A V N O S T I W H T E L G
 N A E D U E N D I E I U W M U Y C Q O J
 C B A T H O E G H O R I N M D X A Y T C
 E R I G S G N G N B L E I D N H R J O T
 T O I R Q O M L A L I L D O A R P M X R
 N H E H L O G Z I R I A I N D T M Y I U
 S P B E D E Z N H T U S N E E I I Q C S
 Y S B E Z P G Q Y V I O S O T R U O V T
 W M E D P N Z E W C R I C M N A R P N H
 N R N X E O S M E I R A E N G Y R U F T
 F G S S F K Y D Y E W N B N E A M X S I
 D K S E M O C L E W T G C S Y L W I L A
 P Z C O M M U N I C A T E E R G I G T F
 X P I H S R E B M E M K R E O C K S O Y

Step 3

Decision Commitment Trust Solution
 Guide Spiritual Foundation Faith
 Communicate Higher Power Practice
 Prayer Willingness Surrender

Challenge: "As we get ready to make this decision, we talk with our sponsor, go to _____ meetings, and take the opportunity to share about it with other NA members."

Tradition 3

Desire Belonging Welcome Personal
 Encourage Tradition Membership Addict
 Acceptance Love Tolerance

Challenge: "With _____ as the foundation of our actions, we learn to support members through any difficulties they may experience."

Created by

*~Audrey B.,
 NA Member*

PUBLIC RELATIONS

“Narcotics Anonymous is not a secret society; Tradition Eleven speaks to personal anonymity, not fellowship anonymity. The better known we are by the public, the more likely it is that addicts seeking recovery—or their friends, relatives, or co-workers—will think of us and know where to find us when they decide to seek help.”

~It Works: How and Why p. 149

“The Eleventh Tradition tells us that, when we engage in public relations activity, we are to speak simply and directly of what Narcotics Anonymous is and what we do. We are not to make exaggerated claims about NA. Our public

relations efforts should be as inviting and nonpromotional as our program itself, saying to addicts and society at large, ‘If you want what we have to offer, this is what we are and how we work. If we can be of service, please let us know.’”

~It Works: How and Why p. 150

When we meet:

5:30pm the last Sunday of each month at the URS Club in Kenai.

HOSPITALS AND INSTITUTIONS (H&I)

Occasionally at the end of a meeting you'll hear it announced that H&I will be having a business meeting sometime in the near future. But what is H&I? The purpose of an H&I meeting is to carry the NA message of recovery to addicts who do not have full access to regular Narcotics Anonymous meetings. There are many addicts that are initially introduced to NA when the message of recovery is shared through H&I meetings in jails, treatment centers, and other institutions.

The Hospitals & Institutions Sub-Committee in our area is currently working to build upon the foundation we've established so that we can begin to reach more addicts seeking recovery. It's a great way to get involved in service and to fulfill our primary purpose, which is to carry the message that any addict can lose the desire to use. We have some exciting new projects in the works and are always in need of volunteers. With these new projects there will also be new positions opening up.

~Audrey B., NA Member

When we meet:

8:15pm the last Thursday of each month at the URS Club in Kenai.

For more information contact:

Audrey (907) 280-8285

Brad (907) 232-7229

Currently seeking:

*Men interested in service work at the jail (1 year clean time requirement).

*Speakers / Panel Members

(There is a 3 month clean time requirement for member orientation and speaker ride-alongs)

ACTIVITIES

Places to find specifics about events:

- **Kenai 907* Facebook page**; click the events tab located at the top.

- **Never Alone 907* Facebook page**

*These are “secret” Facebook groups, you will not find them by searching. If you are not a member yet, please ask someone to add you!

-**Regional Events Page:**

www.akna.org/events

Seasons Change, and So Do I

Through this journey I'm traveling in recovery, I have noticed that my growth is like an analogy of the changing seasons. Each step that I take brings me to another awareness. Each painful experience I walk through with my Higher Power's guidance shows me that I can get through anything without picking up dope.

I used to look at winter as a sad, bitter, cold season that I just had to muscle through, but as my perception changes through the working of my steps, I can see the beauty in it. The visual cleanliness as it appears. Sometimes it's a struggle, but each day, if I pray for guidance in my thoughts, I get to enjoy the coldest season.

What I have realized is that no matter how cold it is outside, if I'm standing spiritually naked in the light of my Higher Power, I feel a warmth that fills me up and comforts me from the inside; and that standing together in the unity of Narcotics Anonymous also creates a love that radiates warmth. When I choose to stand alone, shutting out my Higher Power and my peers in the fellowship, that is when I start to feel the bitter cold of isolation and despair. Today, I choose to stand in the sunlight of the Spirit and join in the unity that is Narcotics Anonymous...when I do this, it truly is...a wonderful life.

~ Tamera M., NA Member

“The search for a God of our own understanding is one of the most important efforts we will undertake in our recovery.”

~ It Works, How and Why p. 30

NEWSLETTER SUBCOMMITTEE:

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Copy Editor

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OPEN

Institutions Edition *NEW*

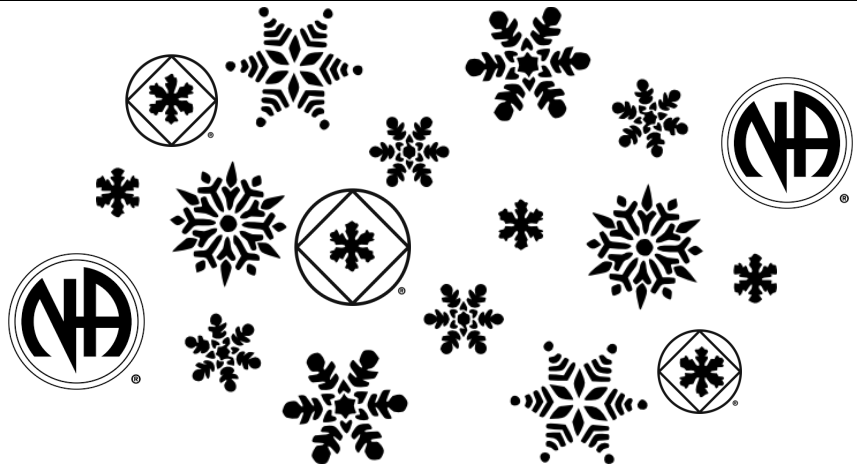
Joey B.

Tradition Guides

Dennis A.

Christy W.

The Recovery Herald is always looking for more writers, artists, reporters, and reminders!!



We would like to thank all of our members who contributed to the newsletter. It was by your efforts that this publication was made possible. We look forward to your contributions in upcoming publications; we accept letters to the editor, articles, jokes, cartoons, polls, cross-words and artwork. **Our next edition will be published in March.** Please keep article submissions to 175-400 words and recovery based. The newsletter is published quarterly. Email all contributions to:

recoveryherald@gmail.com

Please Note: The opinions expressed herein are those of individual members and not the opinions of the Kenai Peninsula Area or NA as a whole. NA is not affiliated in any way with this publication. The Handbook for NA states, "The Twelve Traditions of NA should serve as the basic guidelines for editing your newsletter... the language of NA recovery should be used." All editorial decisions made by the Newsletter Committee have been made with these guidelines and the 12 Concepts in mind. We welcome any feedback in accordance with the second tradition.