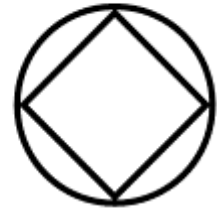




UNITY



"personal recovery depends on NA unity"

The Central Ohio Area of Narcotics Anonymous Newsletter

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Thoughts for the Newcomers: "How does it work?"

What are the two favorite words of most addicts? *"I know!"* Unfortunately, many of us arrive in NA thinking we have all the answers. We have a lot of knowledge about what's wrong with us. But in and of itself, knowledge never helped us stay clean for any length of time. Members who have achieved long-term recovery will be the first to admit that the longer they are here, the more they have to learn. But they do know one thing: By following this simple Twelve-Step program, they have been able to stay clean. They no longer ask "why"; they ask "how." The value of endless speculation pales in comparison to the experience of addicts who've found a way to stay clean and live clean. This doesn't mean we don't ask "why" when it's appropriate. We don't come to NA and stop thinking! But in the beginning, it's often a very good idea to reword our questions. Instead of asking "why," we ask "how." *How* do I work this step? *How* often should I attend meetings? *How* do I stay clean?

The group ... how does the work get done?

Setting up chairs, buying literature, arranging for speakers, cleaning up after the meeting, paying the bills, preparing refreshments—most of the things an NA group does to host its meetings are pretty simple. But if one person had to do them all, those simple things would quickly become overwhelming. That's why a group elects trusted servants: to help divide the work among the group's members. Electing officers is one way the group practices NA's tradition of self-support. Sometimes it seems that groups run all by themselves, but the fact is that someone has to do the work needed to support the group. When group members agree to serve as secretary or treasurer, that acceptance of responsibility often helps advance their personal growth. It also gives them a chance to help enhance the group's ability to carry the recovery message. You don't have to be a group officer to be of service to the group. Every week, there's work to be done: helping set up the meeting, greeting newcomers, cleaning up, bringing refreshments, and other things of that sort. Asking new members to help with these kinds of jobs can make them feel a part of the group more quickly.

An addict shares his experience with ... Step 3

"We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him."
While I worked my Third Step with my sponsor, he asked me what it meant to me to turn my will and my life over to God as I understood Him? I didn't know how to answer that question! I knew the principle, but I didn't know how to apply it. What an awakening for me! Each day when I pray, I ask my Higher Power to keep me clean for the next 24 hours and to provide for my basic needs. Since I have been in recovery, I have come to understand and believe that this is really all that I NEED. Everything else after this is a want. By turning these things over, I am assured that they will both be taken care of. I've had a roof over my head, food in my refrigerator, a hot shower, a job to go to each day and a loving family. But I have wondered if there are other parts of my will and life that need to be turned over to God? For me, the answer is definitely yes! What I think about and how I think is also to be turned over to Him. For example: thoughts about women, money, sex, food or how to spend my leisure time are part of my life too and need to be turned over. It is only through continually turning over these thoughts and my will for these thoughts that I completely work the Third Step. When I stop to think about the Third Step I realize that my willingness to change is directly related to my open-mindedness and this is directly related to how honest I've become with myself. Through faith in my Higher Power, I've come to understand that there is nothing I can't walk through and come out on the other side without being harmed

Unity, not uniformity, is a must in NA.

Tradition Three: *The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.*

The Third Tradition encourages freedom from judgment. It leads us on the path of service toward an attitude of helpfulness, acceptance, and unconditional love. Addiction is a deadly disease. We know that addicts who don't find recovery can expect nothing better than jails, institutions, and death. Refusing admission to any addict, even one who comes merely out of curiosity may be a death sentence for that addict.

Upcoming Region and World Events

- March 18th: HAMASCNA presents Staying Green in Recovery**
The Civitan Center; 1381 Hunter Rd; Fairfield.
Doors open @ 6PM; Open podium from 7-8PM.
Main Speaker 8-9PM. Dance from 9PM-Midnight.
- March 18th: St. Patrick's Day OCNA Fundraiser**
Presented by MEASCNA
12 Neal Ave (Corner Neal & West Main); Newark
Doors open @ 5PM; Potluck dinner 6PM
Speaker; Clean Time Countdown; Dance to follow.
- May 26th-28th: OCNA XXIV**
Holiday Inn; 116 Park Avenue West; Mansfield, OH
MAIL-IN REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS MAY 1st.
Copies available at service office or at www.naohio.org

The Principle of Giving

One of the primary principles I was taught when I came to NA was giving of my time and resources. Whether it's taking an addict to a meeting, chairing a meeting or putting a few dollars in the basket, it's a responsibility that I take seriously. I was reminded of the principle of giving when I attended area service this past month. I heard we were a little short on funds. I have to agree with some of the comments that were made, putting a dollar in the basket is not good enough today. I have been around long enough to know that I can afford to put in a few more dollars. In the past I have been on welfare and couldn't afford to give much; today is much different. As a responsible member of NA and a productive member of society, I know I can do better. I know there are many other ways to give back what this program has given me. There are meetings to chair, people to sponsor, and many other service related activities that I can give to. It's easy to get into the "I'm busy syndrome" but I must apply the principle of giving, its how this program works.

Meetings Needing Support

- Southside Serenity** Monday 7:30 PM Rotating Format
Parsons Apartments; 1949 S. Parsons Ave.; Columbus (South)
- We Care Group** Wednesday 8:00 PM Discussion
Salvation Army; 600 S. Front St.; Columbus (South)
- Never Alone, Never Again** Thursday 7:30 PM Rotating Format
St. Mathew's; 233 S. State St; Westerville (North)
- I Can't, We Can** Saturday 9:30 AM Ask-it-basket
1561 Old Leonard Ave – Recovery Alliance Building
- Volunteers of America 624 Harmon Ave (West)
- New Start Group:** Wed 8 PM **Let's Dump It All:** Friday 7 PM
- Show Up and Grow Un:** Sunday 7 PM

An oldtimer asks ... where are the old timers?

I've become increasingly concerned when old timers with substantial amounts of clean time are missing from meetings. As an old timer with 25+ years of continuous abstinence I find it extremely important for my recovery to attend to 5-7 a week in order to deal with life on life situations, as well as giving back what was freely giving to me. NA does not need me, but now, more than ever the new comers are crying out for our experience, strength, and hope. We were very fortunate and grateful to have AAers to guide us. One thing I remember was they were in the meetings I went to without fail. I used to ask " would I have to go these damn Meetings all the time?" Their response was " the disease doesn't stop growing." Meetings are essential for 12 step work, we were taught this, but we become stagnate in our growth and wonder why. Oh, I stop going to meetings for a time and I felt the pangs of not feeling a part of telling myself I was doing other kinds of service like raising children, going to school, working, and being involved with my church. However, there was something missing because I didn't know to share with non-addicts about the disease. So, I went back to the rooms, to my long lost family with whom I was estranged from. I was in shock because of the direction of NA was headed, but felt at home. I got involved again because of the cross talking, sharing of one's day, bickering, and the revolving door attitude instead of recovery and how the twelve steps work in our lives. Yes, I even got my feelings hurt sometimes when the new comers would say something to effect how I was growing. I didn't use over it and it taught me not to become ripe in my old timers beliefs, I still could grow spiritually. We all have lives today because of what had we learned in NA. There is constant steady influx of new comers who aren't being taught the importance of ninety and ninety, getting a ! sponser, having a home group, finding a God of their understanding, working the steps, or sharing and living the NA way. Old Timers are the backbone of NA. The new comers need to see that Recovery does happen and men and women do get accumulated days of recovery when they don't use dope changing their old behaviors along the way. Remember my brothers and sisters, " the disease stop growing just because I stop using." In Loving Service.

Narcotics Anonymous



More info on meetings or events is available by calling the Area Service Office at (614) 252-1700. Area Service Office is located at 1561 Old Leonard Ave.