



The Group Conscience

Dulles Corridor Area
Narcotics Anonymous

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Events

SHEVANA 2007 PICNIC
Sat, June 2, 2007
Winchester, VA

**REGIONAL SERVICE
COMMITTEE**
SAT, June 9, 2007
Frederick Area

ART AND TALENT SHOW
Sat, June 9, 2007
Community Lutheran
Sterling, VA

WHITewater RAFTING TRIP
June 21-24, 2007
New River, WV

AREA SERVICE
Sun, June 24, 2007
St. Timothy's
Herndon, VA

Tradition 6

By Erica B.

“An NA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest the problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.”

Tradition 6 carries the message which defines NA's primary purpose. In Tradition 6 it is explained in detail the reasons in which NA does not act in any publicity or promoting activities. NA's primary purpose is to carry the message to the suffering addict seeking recovery and if we were to promote NA to the public a lot of

controversy could take place. For instance if NA were to promote its name with another enterprise and then that enterprise goes under how would that reflect on the NA name? It is important to keep our fellowship alive and free and the only word of our anonymous fellowship should come from one addict trying to help another addict. By living the concept of the sixth tradition, NA avoids any problems or controversy that could take place.

The sixth tradition is imperative in order to keep anonymity. If NA were to go

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Is NA Really a Family?

By Beth Y.

It was the dead cold of January in Cincinnati. I'd been clean a few weeks thanks to the grace and love extended to me through Narcotics Anonymous. I was blessed to have someone take me to that first meeting. I had reached a very low, dark place that morning. I was ready to end it all. I reached out to a neighbor I didn't know that well and asked her to take me with her to a Narcotics Anonymous meeting that day. That meeting saved my life. Literally.

I had never, ever, experienced such acceptance. Nothing, absolutely nothing I said was judged. It seemed the most

important thing for those addicts was to help me, the newcomer. But, after awhile, and after many more meetings, I wasn't the newcomer anymore. Surely the love and support would die down. I was humbled and overjoyed to find out that it did not. It grew. My new associations quickly became my 'family.' I grew to depend on them, and they on me. It was a feeling – along with the tangible ways they supported me – that kept me clean.

In the light of sobriety I began to take stock of the damage I'd done to myself and others. It caught my breath. It was something I couldn't look at as a whole. I could barely stomach one thing – let alone

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"Tradition 6" (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

public we may lose a lot of our members who have no where else safe to go. Having an anonymous program is what some may say is one of the most attractive qualities of our group. By applying the sixth tradition is all of our affairs we grant each other freedom. That freedom is important in order for one addict to help another. We are free to come to meeting and be involved in the fellowship without any strings attached, we are also free to carry the message to the addict who suffers without having to face public controversy. By avoiding public controversy we are able to hear others real life experiences without it being dictated by the public which is why our meetings are so effective.

Narcotics Anonymous offers only one

promise, freedom from active addiction. No where in the literature does it state how long this process will take to work for an addict nor does it have guidelines with a time commitment in how fast an addict should work their program. By having that freedom it is easier for a suffering addict to feel where they are at in their recovery is sufficient. By carrying a clear message, working the 12 steps and following the traditions, NA will be sure not to be misconstrued with any other organizations which may confuse our primary purpose and in turn damage the beliefs of our fellowship.

It is believed that our higher power will take care of us. Believing that gives us faith that the God of our understanding will help guide us in our

recovery and take care of our shortcomings. If NA can demonstrate this new found faith then it will never be necessary for us to rely on any other outside enterprise. After all, by relying on each other to take care of our basic needs we are forming functional skills we never had in active addiction that is why service is so important to our fellowship. NA has no need to build its reputation, it speaks for itself when we meet together for meetings and see that there are members with more clean time than us.

"IS NA REALLY A FAMILY?" (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

all of it. I had to face the biggest issue first. I needed to return a car to my sister in Virginia. I was to have paid a small sum each month for this great car but had not paid a dime. My addiction precluded even that simple promise.

I made the trip, planning on staying three days to visit before my trip home to Cincinnati. It was important for me to keep my routine of meetings while here in Virginia, but I was nervous. I missed my support network from home. They knew me. They embraced me. Would I find anyone to connect with in a meeting here? I just didn't think so. I was in

another state, another landscape altogether. In addition, my meetings at home were far from the suburbs, where I currently found myself in Virginia. How different was that going to be? Would I still find the unconditional love that I found in the rooms at home? Would anyone else suffering reach out to me? Would anyone be receptive to an out-of-towner if I reached out to them?

My beloved family, you know the answer. It doesn't matter where we are or who we are. We always have a home and the support we so desperately need as long as we're in the rooms of Narcotics

Anonymous. An addict trying to recover can connect with another addict in recovery no matter the circumstances. There are no state boundaries, it doesn't matter what country you're from – our suffering is universal. Through NA, our hope is universal.

Thank you to my fellow addicts in Virginia who have embraced this out-of-town guest. It is you who have shown me, that in NA, I will always be home.

I Am An Addict: Part Two

By Den O.

Dear Tina:

It is with great sadness that I have to end our relationship. I enjoyed our time together. We hit it off instantly and we were spending all of our time together. You not only had my heart, you had my soul.

As our relationship progressed and we were seeing each other daily, I fell in love with you more and more. I felt I could not live without you. I did not want to live without you. You were my life.

Although I loved you more than you loved me, I really thought I could control you. I felt that I needed you and could control you and that leveled the "LOVE" playing field, but it did not, I could not.

I should have known that it was not to be forever as you have broken so many hearts before mine. You were turning against me, just as you had turned against them. History does repeat itself.

It happened when I least expected it. I had lost control of you. I gave you the power to destroy our love affair and my life. You tried to kill me and you almost succeeded. At that moment, I realized that you did not have my best interest at heart. I had lost my self-respect, my self-esteem, myself. Tina, it is not healthy for me to have you in my life emotionally, physically, mentally or spiritually.

I know you will find another and continue your path of destruction, but it will not be with me. I will be ok, my life will go on without you, but it will take time. I am learning to live my life without you and for that, my life will be better.

I know you understand,

Den

This was my "Dear John" letter to my drug Crystal Meth aka Tina. It was a required exercise while in rehab after my overdose. When I read it aloud to my counselor and to the other addicts in my group, I wept. My tears were for myself, the loss of my love for the drug and for the near loss of my life. I mourned that loss as one would mourn the loss of a loved one. I knew from that point forward life was never going to be the same. I quelled my feelings for so long, and now as the feelings began to surface I discovered extreme sorrow.

There are many different paths to recovery and choosing that path is a very personal decision. Considering the excessive nature of my drug use, the fact that I was slamming Crystal Meth and my near death overdose, deemed intensive therapy my only choice. The path I chose was an in-patient, twenty-eight day rehabilitation center in Laguna Beach, California.

I needed a change in my environment and surroundings.

I needed intense therapy.

I needed to change my daily habits immediately.

I needed freedom from addiction.

I needed to understand how to live my life drug free.

I needed to figure out why I did this to myself.

I needed relief from my pain – without drugs.

I needed to know that everything was going to be ok.

I needed something yet unknown and I was scared.

If I did not find what I needed, then I was going to rely on my old need – Crystal Meth.

The rehabilitation center I chose had a gay track and that was important to me. The center was educated about Crystal Meth addiction and was not a lock-down facility, which was also important. It allowed me to have my cell phone and my laptop computer while I was a client. I did not need discipline, discipline I had. It was a soft place to fall. They approached addiction as a brain disease and treated it as such. They treated me as a patient, not as a convict. The treatment was beneficial, not punitive. I had punished myself enough and no one could punish me or treat me as badly as I had myself. Therefore, any further punishment would be redundant.

I overdosed on Monday, came out of the coma on Thursday, admitted to Rehab on Sunday and began treatment on Monday. Thus began a personal journey to my new life - recovery.

The vital elements were the twice-daily group sessions with a skilled and licensed counselor, the individual counseling sessions and the personal education with the work necessary to achieve my goals. My goal was to have the tools necessary to stay clean, yet live a fulfilling and happy life. To acquire these tools it was necessary to learn from those who had done this before me; reading literature, listening to other addicts and reliving my past in therapy so as not to relive my past in the future. It was work, it was painful, it was personal, and I was determined to glean the necessary information to achieve my goal.

After thirty-one days in rehab, I left with an understanding of my past, an

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Dulles Corridor Area NA

Our area is located in Northern Virginia and holds about 20 meetings per week in Oakton, Reston, Chantilly, Centreville, Sterling, Leesburg and Round Hill.

Anniversaries

STAN B. CELEBRATES 10 YRS
I'm Somebody
Fri, June 1, 2007

BARBARA P. 1 YR ANNIVERSARY
SAT, JUNE 16, 2007
TO BE CELEBRATED
Free to Live
Mon, July 2, 2007

"I AM AN ADDICT: PART TWO" (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

appreciation for the present, and optimism about the future. I went to rehab for counseling by professionals and found friendship and counseling from other addicts in the program, too. I attended my counseling sessions hoping to learn new ways to cope, yet I also found those coping mechanisms during dinner and long walks with my peers. I was scared to go into rehab, and now I was scared to leave.

Rehab for me was a very safe environment among people who possessed a sensibility I

have grown to depend on. One learns a great amount about oneself while in rehab and learns a great amount about the other addicts in the program, as well. We honestly liked each other in spite of our bad behaviors during active addiction, despite not liking ourselves. Empathy, compassion and understanding are a natural emotional response when addicts interact. Rehab was a positive growth experience for which I am truly grateful. I was blessed because the first stepping-stone in my recovery, rehab, saved my

life. With trepidation, I boarded the plane to return to my old life. I had five hours until I would be confronted with my past, the people I had hurt, the places I had used and the demons I had left behind. As the door to the plane opened and I began walking down the jet-way, surprisingly, I knew exactly what my next move would be.

This article will be continued in next month's issue of The Group Conscience

Recovering Humor



Narcotics Anonymous

is a nonprofit fellowship of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. We meet regularly to help each other stay clean. We are not interested in what or how much you used, but only in what you want to do about your problem and how we can help.

Want to see your work in print?
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or log on to www.dcana.org