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### Individual Highlights:

- Tradition
- Concept
- Step
- Study Question
- Information



**STEP 12** *"Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."*

"God helps us as we help each other. One aspect of our spiritual awakening comes through the new understanding of our Higher Power that we develop by sharing another addict's recovery.

Life takes on a new meaning, a new joy, and a quality of being and feeling worthwhile. We become spiritually refreshed and are glad to be alive. Yes, we are a vision of hope. We are examples of the program working.

The joy that we have in living clean is an attraction to the addict who still suffers. We do recover to live clean and happy lives. Welcome to N.A. The steps do not end here. The steps are a new beginning!"  
Basic Text 5<sup>th</sup> Ed



### Experience, Strength, and Hope



I was 1st introduced to recovery through a treatment center. At the time I didn't think I had a problem, I was 22 years old. When I got out of the rehab, I only went to meetings as a social thing. When they read the 12 steps and traditions, I tuned them out. I didn't see what they had to do with drugs, and I really didn't care.

I did make one friend in recovery, a person I had gotten high with. She happened to be at the 1st meeting I went to, and we began to hang out.

However, I hadn't changed any of my people, places, or things, and eventually ended up using again.

During my relapse, the one friend I had made wrote a letter to me letting me know that in order to work her program; she needed to let me go. I had no clue that she was working a 12th step with me; I only knew my last link to recovery was in jeopardy. So, I called her, and we began to go to meetings together. When I reached out, the hand was there.

When I got clean this time, I remember trying to read the steps. They all kind of jumbled together. And any mention of God, or Spirituality stood out and I was uncomfortable with them the 12th step in particular "Having had a spiritual awakening" always popped out at me. I thought I would see a

burning bush, or be forced to be dipped in a pool surrounded by folks in robes. I just didn't understand what ANY of that stuff had to do with me NOT using drugs. I kept being told "Go to 90 in 90", "work the steps", "get a sponsor", "never say NO to service", When you don't feel like going to a meeting, that's the best time to go to a meeting". So, I went to ALOT of meetings; sometimes two or three a day. I began to get an understanding of the 1st step, NOT using, powerlessness, and unmanageability. I got a sponsor, and talked to him about all this stuff, and who I was. Cont pg 3



**12th Step Question**

**"How do you know you have had a spiritual awakening?"**

I knew I had a spiritual awakening when there was something that was causing me major turmoil in my life, I prayed an earnest prayer to my higher power and I immediately knew that there was nothing that I could do to fix it and at the same time I felt an enormous amount of peace and certainty that it was going to be fine - the situation would be resolved with no help from me. Tracey P. W. 17 yrs, 4 months.

I know that I have had a spiritual awakening because there is now a spirit where there once was sadness and despair, I am living life on life's terms without the use, I have been liberated from the viscous cycles of alcohol and drug addiction. Rochelle M 17 years

You know you had a spiritual awakening, when you decide that you have no more control of what happenings in your life, and you have accepted that fact, you know? No matter what, I will not use. July 01, 1995 Janice H.

My spiritual awakening was when I realize that if I practice the same things over and over I will get the same results actually it's called spiritual retardation.

**Tradition 12** *"Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities."*

A dictionary definition of anonymity is "a state of bearing no name." In keeping with Tradition Twelve, the "I" becomes "we." The spiritual foundation becomes more important than any one group or individual.

Therefore, we attempt to rigorously adhere to the principle that "what is said in meetings stays in meetings." Throughout our Traditions, we speak in terms of "we"

and "our" common welfare; we achieve the true spirit of anonymity.

The drive for personal gain in the areas of sex, property and social position, which brought so much pain in the past, falls by the wayside if we adhere to the principle of anonymity. Anonymity is one of the basic elements of our recovery and it pervades our Traditions and our Fellowship. It protects us from our own

defects of character and renders personalities and their differences powerless. Anonymity in action makes it impossible for personalities to come before principles.

Basic Text 5<sup>th</sup> Ed



**12th Concept** *"In keeping with the spiritual nature of Narcotics Anonymous, our structure should always be one of service, never of government."*

Our structure should always be one of service, never of government. Selfless service is an essentially spiritual endeavor.

NA service is not about forcing our will or our ideas on others; rather, it is about humbly serving them, without expectation of reward.

This principle underlies all we do in our groups,

service boards, and committees. The Twelfth Concept reminds us that we ourselves have experienced recovery only because others put this selfless principle into action before us, taking the time and the care to carry the NA message to us when we were still suffering from active addiction.

To maintain our accountability to those we

serve, we are bound to inform them in a complete, accurate, and concise fashion of our activities.

In keeping with the spiritual nature of Narcotics Anonymous our structure should always be one of service never of government. Twelfth Concept brings our consideration of concepts for NA service back to the spiritual root of selfless service. NA.ORG



**Experience, Strength, and Hope**  
**Tradition 12**



My experience with this tradition has come from my continued commitment to service since I got clean in 1993. One of the first things I was told after surrendering to the

disease of addiction in the First Step was that if I wanted to stay clean - "GET IN SERVICE" and since that time, I have been blessed throughout my recovery. The first

thing I needed to understand was that in NA we have only one promise - "freedom from active addiction."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

I began to have a relationship with a Higher Power, not even realizing it was happening, asking God for help whether I believed in God or not. The steps began to take an active part in my life, just by showing up at meetings and being open minded, taking suggestions. Then one day, a friend who decided to use again called me. I called an old timer and my sponsor; they told me "Never do a 12 step call alone". I didn't know what that meant, being my 1st introduction to the 12th step in a practical application. So, I asked "What's a 12 step call?" It was explained to me, in a general way, that carrying the message to the still suffering addict when they call for help is a 12 step call. I was told NEVER to respond to a call alone, because "you can't throw a rope from a slippery rock" and that a using addict will pull you out before you pull them into recovery. The therapeutic value of one addict helping another, Yes, However, I was not strong enough to fight the disease on my own. I began to understand more about "The disease", that it was stronger than me, and something to be feared and respected. Old timers were telling me not to go up against it alone.

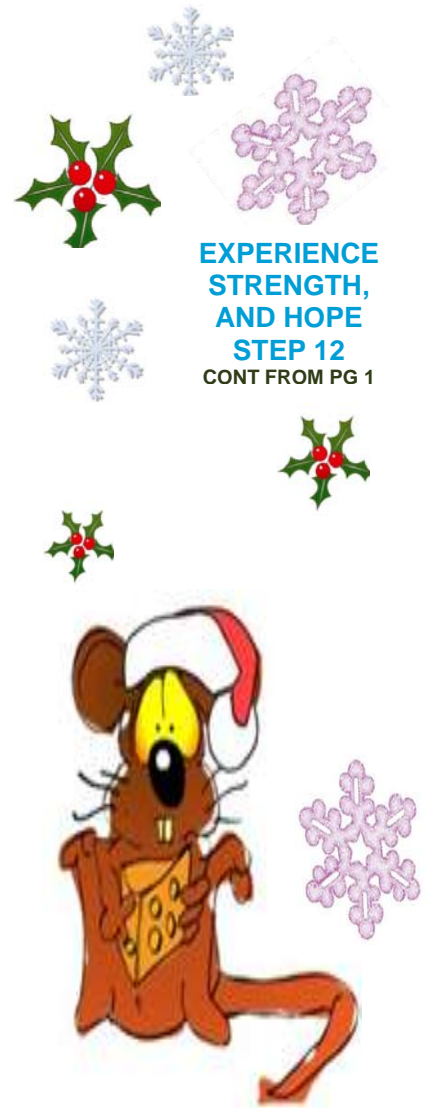
I thought this might be my "Spiritual Awakening", well, more was to be revealed. I was coming up on

celebrating 5 years clean, when that same best friend called me to tell me She had began to use again. I was crushed. We had gone to meetings together almost daily. It was very difficult for me. She told me to call her when I thought I could. Right then, the program kicked in. I said " NO, you call ME when you are ready for recovery" I knew I couldn't do it alone, slippery rock etc. She said "I thought you were all about unconditional love." Then the spirituality kicked in. I said "My Love for you is unconditional; my friendship however, is NOT. As you showed me years ago, I will not watch you kill yourself by using. My friendship is VERY conditional on you being IN recovery. So, again, call me when you ready to stop using". I didn't know I was carrying the message. I just knew I didn't want to use, and someone that close to me using again was a threat to my recovery. I can gratefully say that today that friend has 17 years back in recovery, and tells her side of our story every time she is asked to share. I practiced the principals in THAT affair, and a Higher Power took over the rest. Also, God willing, because it was done to me, this December (2009) I will be celebrating 22 years clean in recovery from addiction. 22 years clean at the age of 44, half my entire life. Now, years later, I see that without the 12th step, I

would not be here, my friend would not be here, and we ALL wouldn't have a program of recovery to follow and guide us through our lives without the use of drugs. Someone spread the message to me, I have had the privilege to spread the message to others. Sometimes, just telling people NOT in recovery that I don't use, and go to meetings, plants a seed. I cannot count how many people have called me over the years saying "You go to those meetings, right?" or, "I heard you speak 10 years ago at the prison and you inspired me". Many of these people are still clean and working a program of recovery. Now, formally working a 12th step with your sponsor and the Step working guide, have given me a new and deeper understanding of this step. I see and read it very differently now.

"Having had a spiritual awakening AS A RESULT OF THESE STEPS..." I see the 12th step as a result of investing in the 11 steps before it, getting to know myself as a recovering person, defects and all, making amends, how to share with others, the N.A. way. I was told to stick around, that one day I would get it, and I would understand all this stuff jumbled in front of me. **That's carrying the message for me.**

Billy M~ESH



**Don't be afraid that your life will end, be afraid that it will never begin. Live simply. Love generously. Care deeply. Speak kindly. Leave the rest to God.**



**Twelfth Concept  
Sudy and Discussion  
Questions**

1. What is the difference between service and government?
2. The difference between a governing organization and a service organization is often not of structure but of spiritual foundation and purpose. What is it about NA's primary purpose and its spiritual identity that says "our structure should always be one of service, never of government?"
3. The essay on the Twelfth Concept talks about how gratitude, humility, communication, and selflessness help our structure remain "one of service, never of government." Discuss these things.
4. Discuss how the Twelfth Concept applies to each of the eleven other concepts.

**Meetings from the Old Trust Update:**

Saturday Men's Rap Step Meeting will now meet at the following: Saturday 11:30 am Men's Rap Step Group Greater Southeast Community Hospital Auditorium 1310 Southern Avenue, SE Washington, DC 20002

**THE BEGINNERS STEP TO FREEDOM GROUP HAS RELOCATED** NEW ADDRESS IS: WOODRIDGE NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARY 1801 HAMLIN ST. NE WASHINGTON, DC 20018 LOWER LEVEL RM 3 CORNER OF 18<sup>TH</sup> AND RHODE ISLAND AVE.

Moved from Trust to:  
Sunday Morning Spiritual  
9:00 -10:15am  
OIC Bldg  
606 Raleigh S.E.  
Washington D.C.

Moved from Trust to:  
Sunday  
10:30 Coffee Hour  
Group  
Providence Hospital  
Ground Floor Lounge

Moved from Trust to:  
Beginner's Step to  
Freedom Woodridge  
Library, 1801 Hamlin  
St NE Room 3

**\*\*\*\*Please make sure that all moves or Meeting Changes are submitted to PI Subcommittee. This will help insure our Meeting List remains current\*\*\*\***

**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY AND CONGRATS**

**ANTHONY W.**

Hope you can help me out. Will be celebrating 16 years, a day at a time, Friday, December 11, 2009 - 7:00 pm at the One Step at A Time Group, 4729 14th Street, NW. (This is an NA event)

*Crystal* 12 yrs  
*Deborah* 13 yrs  
*Janice H.* 10 yrs

*Vincent B* 3 yrs  
*Manuel S* 12 yrs  
*Rodney A* 6 yrs



**"How do you know you have had a spiritual awakening?"**

My first spiritual awakening was when I found out I had the disease of addiction. This was a great relief to me. This provided a different perspective on how I felt about myself and how my situation could be addressed via the 12 Steps. Ronald S - 6 years

There has been a profound shift in my thinking, attitude, behavior, and spirit. Thaddeus M. 14 years

Almost 16 years later, those words have grown to mean freedom from all the avenues that addiction can take, even though I am totally abstinent from all chemical drugs, the point has been made that freedom from active addiction takes many forms and all these forms are dependent on one thing: acceptance and surrender. In the process of recovery, I have come to acknowledge my powerlessness in other areas of my life: sex, money, prestige, fame, obsessions, gambling, anything I do to excess that creates problems and I allow to distract me from reality. In "How does it work" some of the most clearest statements I have read and heard in our Fellowship are: "If you want what we have to offer, and are willing to make the effort to get it, then you are ready to take certain steps." And the latter "Those who keep coming to our meetings regularly

stay clean." If our meetings are not surrendering to the Steps and Traditions, there is no atmosphere of recovery. This is not attraction, but by allowing newcomers to see our recovery, we become attractive. As our First Tradition speaks of Unity, we as a fellowship do many things to promote unity, and in doing so, we begin to promote our Fellowship, and its doing those times that I, as a member, need to be personally responsible for the way I allow society to see me if I choose to let society know me as NA member.

In looking at the greater responsibility, I realize customs and routines give us positive ways to handle things that come up from time to time. Our use of the word 'tradition' goes slightly beyond the dictionary definition. We apply it to mean that the interconnected group of principles reinforcing and combining to give us a whole much greater

the sum of individual parts. Our Traditions are really a spiritual network that helps us get along with each other while fulfilling our mission to stay clean and help others.

Spiritual guides for addicts seeking recovery must be well worded and have sustained a certain amount of pressure. We cannot afford to play word games or sound good 'just for effect'. If our principles do not work for us, we are in serious trouble.

Personalities are neither good nor bad in and of themselves. They become one or the other through usage.

If our actions and reactions produce useful, interesting and positive effects, we are sure to be honest, open and willing to a degree. Stepping out of the labels is the spirit of anonymity.

What gets done or goes undone becomes important instead of accessing blame and passing out guilt.

Cutting this negative

in half is part of the change, we experience through anonymity. If our differences take precedent over our similarity, we may find ourselves stuck in a cycle of useless conflict.

This is bad in as much as it wastes time and energy and fails to satisfy our desire for personal improvement. And as long as we think the problem is with the other person(s), we're not apt to **GET** the help.

EXPERIENCE  
STRENGTH, AND HOPE  
TRADITION 12  
CONT FROM PG 2



### So let's look at Anonymity

- When I was a newcomer, I thought we said, "*Anonymity* is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions" so that we could tell how new someone was by the way they pronounced *anonymity*.
- Later, as I got involved in service work, I heard a newcomer say, "*Animosity* is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions." I think he hit the nail on the head with that one.
- Down the road, as my life began to stabilize and my interests began to expand, another newcomer said, "*Anatomy* is the spiritual foundation." Once again, I could relate!

~12<sup>TH</sup> TRADITION EXPERIENCE STRENGTH AND HOPE BY GRATEFUL ADDICT IN THE DC AREA~



**DC Link Disclaimer:**

The “DC Link” is the monthly newsletter of the DC Area Service Committee. Its purpose is “carrying the message of recovery and increasing unity”. The opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of Narcotics Anonymous as a whole. No endorsement of, or affiliation with any organization is intended or implied. Reprint rights are granted to all service boards and committees of NA. Submissions from members are eagerly welcomed, but the newsletter subcommittee reserves the right to return or edit.

**We’re on the Web!**  
**Regional Area:**

<http://www.cprna.org>  
[dclink@cprna.org](mailto:dclink@cprna.org)



5	<b>Gratitude Dinner</b>  <b>5:30-9pm</b>	<b>First Methodist Church of Laurel</b> <b>517 Main Street</b> <b>Laurel, MD 20707</b> <u><a href="#">Flyer</a></u>	<b>Central Maryland Special Events</b>	<b>\$9 in advance</b> <b>\$11 at the door</b> <b>\$5 kids</b>
12	<b>Regional Service Committee</b>  <b>10am-12noon: Subcommittees</b> <b>12-1pm: Lunch</b> <b>1-4pm: RSC</b>	<b>Carmody Hills Baptist Church</b> <b>6501 Seat Pleasant Drive</b> <b>Capitol Heights, MD 20009</b> <u><a href="#">Flyer</a></u>	<b>South Potomac Area</b>	<b>FREE EVENT</b>



**P.I. Subcommittee**  
 Third Friday @ Providence Hospital  
 1150 Varnum St NE St Catherine Hall  
 Conference Room #2, 7:00pm

**Chair: Jeff W.**

**Special Events Subcommittee**  
 Third Saturday @ St Martin’s Church  
 1908 N Capitol St NW 4:00pm

**Chair: Sasha P**

**The Literature Subcommittee**  
 Third Thursday  
 Kennedy Recreation Center  
 1401 7th St NW  
 6:30pm

**Chair: Sandra H**

**DCASC SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS**

**DCASC AREA SERVICE**

**First Saturday**  
**WESMINISTER CHURCH**  
 400 I STREET, SW  
 Administrative Meeting @ 10:45  
 Area Meeting @ NOON

**Chair: Anthony W**

**Vice Chair: Rhoda N**

**Newsletter Subcommittee**  
 Third Friday @ Providence Hospital 6:30 PM  
 St Catherine Hall  
**Chair: James M**

**H&I Subcommittee**

**Fourth Sat @ Providence Hospital Main Lecture Hall**  
 1150  
 Varnum St NE  
 3pm

**Chair: Gloria P**

**DCASC Policy Subcommittee**  
 Third Tuesday  
 JMBC  
 746 Ridge Rd SE 6:30pm  
**Chair: Louis J**

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_