



Straight Hope

Montgomery Area Narcotics Anonymous Newsletter
October 2017

Just for today I will have faith in someone in NA who believes in me and wants to help me in my recovery

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October Anniversaries/Celebrations

Mike H	22	Easy Like Sunday Morning	10/1
Karen G	2	NA at Noon	10/9
Kevin C	1	Making a Difference	10/12
Richard W	33	Monday Night Steps	10/23
Dominique H	1	It Works How & Why	10/23
Pam R	29	Monday Night Steps	10/23
Donnie S	17	Illness in Recovery	10/23
Dan H	25	Illness in Recovery	10/23
Tony F	17	NA at Noon	10/31

What's Happening

November 24 – 26, 2017 FSRCNA XXV Plant
The Seed For Recovery 25th Anniversary
 At the Delta Hotels by Marriott
 Baltimore/Hunt Valley MD
 To register visit <http://www.fsrcna.org>
 Convention Information: Liz L. 443-451-5418

WCNA37—"The Magic Is Still Real" World Convention of NA

Aug 30–Sep 2, 2018

Don't miss the opportunity to attend a World Conference while hosted right here in the US!
Orange County Convention Center
9800 International Dr, Orlando, FL

ONLINE REGISTRATION OPENS SEP 25
<https://www.na.org/?ID=wcna37-reg>

Groups in Need

- **The Alternative** – Needs members, Donations are low as is attendance
- **Making A Difference** – Home group members needed
- **Meetin' In Wheaton** - Tues. Nights at 8pm
Needs a Coffee Maker, a Co-Chair and Greeter - Attend meeting to Volunteer



Send us an email to post your Announcements & Anniversaries here:
moco.news@cprna.org



MONTHLY FOCUS STEP 10

"We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it."

After making our amends in Step 9, we now move on to Step 10, in which we continue to take personal inventory, and when we are wrong, we admit our faults without delay. This particular Step should be practiced daily to ensure a steady course in our recovery. As we now live by the new Spiritual Principles that we've learned so far, we can be even more certain that the knowledge, strength, courage, faith, and hope can be utilized in our daily lives as we continue to move forward in our recovery. All the skills that we've learned thus far can help us to steady our minds eye toward the destination that we seek.

As we maintain a sharp, persistent focus on our goals, desires, and ambitions, we start to prepare ourselves for the many rewards to come. We continue to work the program to better all aspects of our lives. As we employ this optimistic mindset, we start to notice negative traits of character that may still hinder our positive growth. During the process of Step 10, we become critics of our own character. The character flaws that still plague us are scrutinized, and we do our part in their removal. Humility is still a principle that we have to utilize, as we continue to take personal inventory. We've learned through the course of working the Steps that we must accept the things that we cannot change, and we use our newfound awareness, strength, and courage to change the things that we can.

As we continue to take personal inventory, we reflect on all the knowledge and wisdom that we've acquired through working the previous Steps. Every day becomes an adventure, as we strive to achieve the desires of our heart. Our new and true inner voice directs our every step on our march towards everlasting joy, peace of mind, and personal freedom. We come to realize that all of our experiences have led us to this point, and that we are precisely where we're supposed to be right now. Righteous living, integrity, honesty, and positive motivation become a way of life. We start to become more secure in our recovery, and we start to appreciate the foundation that we've built.

To thoroughly work this Step, we begin to reflect on each day. We get in touch with ourselves on a deeper level, as we start to recognize our inner workings. As we reflect on our day, we bring to mind our attitudes, feelings, thoughts, behaviors, actions, reactions, interactions with other people, our sense of self-confidence, and self-esteem, as we acknowledge the good and the bad through the course of the day. This is our personal inventory, and we especially need to make sure that we didn't wrong others, and if we did, then we need to admit our wrongdoings. This is Step 10, the action step that maintains and enhances our personal development. All the Spiritual Principles that we've learned can be put to use as we march onward in our recovery. Day after day, as we work this Step, our way of life bring us a more meaningful and serene existence. Working Step 10 on a daily basis keeps us on the road of positive change, and spiritual growth.

Source: IP: Living the Program Copyright © 1983 by, NA Sources The Basic Text Ch. 10; It Works How and Why

IP - Living the Program
What Worked for Us: NA Daily Journal

The purpose of this daily inventory is to keep track of who we are and what we are doing today.

Try to answer every question, every day.

Keep your answers as simple and as honest as you can.

If you miss a day, do not make it up later.

Limit your answers and concerns to the past twenty-four hours complete the questions at the end of the day.

If you wish to share some of this journal, we suggest that you do so verbally.

Remember that a daily inventory is not a test; there are no right or wrong answers.

Do not get upset if you could have done better or if you fail to live up to your expectations of yourself.

Remember, this is a program of growth and recovery if you are clean today, you are doing something right.

Just for today, my thoughts will be on my recovery, living and enjoying life without the use of drugs.

Am I clean today? _____

How have I acted differently? _____

Did my disease run my life today? _____
If so, how? _____

What did I do today that I wish I had not done? _____

What have I left undone that I wish I had done? _____

Was I good to myself today? _____
How? _____

Was today a good day? _____

Was I happy? _____

Was I serene? _____

Just for today I will have faith in someone in NA who believes in me and wants to help me in my recovery.

Did I talk to my sponsor today? _____

Did I attend a meeting today? _____
Where? _____

Did I share my experiences, strengths, and hopes? _____

Who are the people in my life that I trust today? _____

Who has trust in me today? _____

Just for today I will have a program; I will try to follow it to the best of my ability.

Did I read from our literature today? _____

What steps did I consciously work? _____

Did I admit my powerlessness today? _____

Was I able to put my trust in my Higher Power today? _____

What did I learn about myself today? _____

Did I make any amends today? _____

Do I owe any? _____

Did I admit fault to anyone today? _____

Did I worry about yesterday or tomorrow? _____

Can I accept myself as I am today? _____

Just for today, through NA, I will try to get a better perspective on my life.

Did I feel like I was a part of humanity today? _____

Did I allow myself to become obsessed by anything today? _____

What has God given me to be grateful for today? _____

Have I done anything to cause harm to myself or to another today? _____

If so, what? _____

Am I willing to change today? _____

Did I pray or meditate today? _____

How did this affect my life? _____

What spiritual principles have I been able to practice in my life today? _____

Was the most important thing in my life today staying clean? _____

Just for today I will be unafraid, my thoughts will be on my new associations, people who are not using and have found a new way of life. So long as I follow that way, I have nothing to fear.

Have I given of myself today without expecting anything in return? _____

Was there fear in my life today? _____

Did I feel intense joy or pain? _____

Did I call or visit someone in the program today? _____

Did I pray for the well-being of another today? _____

Was I happy today? _____

Have I been peaceful today? _____

Did I consciously remember that I have a choice today? _____

Dear God, show me what I have done right and wrong today. Show me how I can better live and serve your will tomorrow.

Addict's Share

Moment

I was skeptical of meditation when I first arrived in NA, and for some time into recovery. Being skilled at finding logical rationalization to support my resistance to effort, I adopted a line in the “How It Works” chapter of our Basic Text: “For those of us who do not pray, meditation is our only way of working this step.” I felt unique: I was one who did not meditate, so prayer was my only way of working this Step.

As I studied Step Eleven, I asked my sponsor and others, “Why meditate?” The answer is simple: If I want the full benefits of NA, I must be willing to practice the entire program, not just selected parts. Of course, I don’t have to meditate; I can settle for limited benefits of a limited program if I choose. Our literature describes some of these benefits: “Quieting the mind through meditation brings an inner peace” and “emotional balance is one of the first results of meditation.” The Eleventh Step does not say we sought through prayer OR meditation, so I began to practice. I began shaky and uncertain at first, with the same opening, but narrow, mind with which I began each step. It took almost a year before I recognized subtle, yet profound changes meditation was providing. For me, subtleties don’t often work. I needed complete unmanageability before I could admit I needed help. So it was with meditation. I needed an undeniable and bold experience, and my first such experience was in nature.

I was sitting on a bench atop a steep, forested cliff, overlooking a Pacific Ocean sunset. I got quiet, found freedom from my self-centered thought, and became more aware of my surroundings. I felt and heard the loud and powerful driving wind as it came in from the ocean and up the cliffs, through the hair on my arms and head. I smelled the salt of the sea that permeated everything. I saw the energy of this magical place bringing joy to all as couples walked on the beach far below and children played in the water and sand, dogs chased each other, and waves crashed endlessly.

I saw the sun sinking, before my very eyes, into the distant water. Then, for a brief moment, the sun stopped sinking! Dogs stopped chasing each other, children stopped playing, and couples stopped walking!

The constant driving wind, my breath and my heartbeat, stopped—for a moment, an eternal moment. I knew then, and I know now, that the wind was not and is not constant. The sound, the sights, my heart and feelings, none are constant. The entire reality is beating, in perfect rhythm, and I am a part of that beat.

I could no longer deny my place in this universe, nor could I deny the value of meditation. My mind had opened enough to stand down and allow my spirit to fully experience them.

I was awake!

Today, meditation is a daily practice. I still have profound experiences, but they are the exception rather than the norm. For the most part, nothing happens—and I am completely at peace with that. I have come to recognize through prayer and meditation that most of the time I am dominated by my selfish, narcissistic, and insatiable ego; however, my ego does not define me.

I am blessed with the ability to set aside the demands of ego and enter a state of freedom from self-obsession through the practice of prayer and meditation. My ego is so used to trying to exploit all it encounters that it is generally unaware of my body, except as a tool for gratification. My ego is appalled by my body’s frailty. It does not want to consider the ways of my liver or kidneys. My ego typically orders my body around, like a bully, commanding it to stay faithful to its tasks. Now, in the quiet of meditation, my ego is confused and diminished as it surrenders to nothing more distinguished than inhalation . . . and exhalation . . . inhalation . . . and exhalation. My ego has no recourse except to give up some of its demands on my consciousness. Eventually, I focus on the tremendously unremarkable fact that I am breathing.

The challenge posed by sitting quietly and doing nothing other than existing is extraordinary. I am drawn to distraction as I strive to attend only to my breath. I sense my mind shooting this way and that on its frantic itinerary. When all of my attention is momentarily directed toward my breathing instead of my ego’s incessant demands, it slowly begins to give up some of its claim to my consciousness and lets in data that it normally filters out. I become aware of things that have nothing to do with my usual concerns: my heartbeat, breath, skeleton, limbs, and blood, and my true surroundings. Suddenly, the grass is greener, the snow more brilliant. All has stopped for the moment as I recognize the rhythm to which I belong—recovery and unity with a loving Higher Power, our planet, and all its inhabitants.

I know I don’t need to meditate, but now I want to. “Without this step, it is unlikely that we could experience a spiritual awakening, practice spiritual principles in our lives or carry a sufficient message to attract others to recovery.”

Just for today, I am ever grateful for “the benefit of the spiritual wealth that we have found.” I am awake.

Anonymous

Cited from NAWay_Apr17_Web.pdf.

Literature quotations from Step Eleven essay Basic Text chapter “How It Works.”





Create a recovery toolbox

The goal of having a recovery toolbox is to have various options of coping skills so that when you are in intense distress, you have something to choose from to keep you grounded and on the right track. Too often, when we are in distress, we run out of ideas resorting to unhealthy habits compromising our recovery.

MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness is a way of thinking and focusing that can help one become more aware of present experiences. There are some things we do every day without even thinking about them, like brushing our teeth. Mindfulness involves paying attention to the feelings and sensations of these experiences.

Research has shown mindfulness to help with anxiety problems as well those suffering with symptoms of PTSD. It has been found that mindfulness can help with problems or symptoms often experienced by survivors and trauma victims. We are definitely survivors! Mindfulness could be used by itself or together with other techniques such as meditation, Yoga, exercise, mental health therapy.

We hear often in the rooms this is a feelings disease. In the basic text Chapter Four, How It Works it says under step 11 "We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him..." further in the chapter it reminds us that this is a spiritual disease and that we must continually practice these principles in all our affairs. In our quest to continually improve our spiritual awakening and wellbeing we find many tools available out there. They all aim to help us find that inner peace learning to deal with the feelings we experience in recovery and how to act without hurting ourselves or others while going through them.

Mindfulness practice has two key parts:

- Paying attention to and being aware of the present moment
- Accepting or being willing to experience your thoughts and feelings without judging them

For example, focusing on the inhale and exhale of your breathing is one way to concentrate on the present moment.

Mindfulness involves allowing your thoughts and feelings to pass without either clinging to them or pushing them away. You just let them take their natural course.

While practicing mindfulness, you may become distracted by your thoughts and that is okay. The process is about being willing to notice where your thoughts take you, and then bringing your attention back to the present.

As you learn to be mindful, you learn to observe what is happening in your body and your mind. You can then learn to be more willing to cope with difficult thoughts and feelings in a healthy way.

Target specific problems such as:

- Urges to use
- Difficult feelings and stress in daily living
- The stress of physical health problems, such as chronic pain
- Negative thinking patterns that can lead to repeated episodes of depression or anxiety
- Trouble working toward your goals in life

How can mindfulness help reduce stress?

Mindfulness can increase your ability to cope with difficult emotions, such as anxiety and depression.

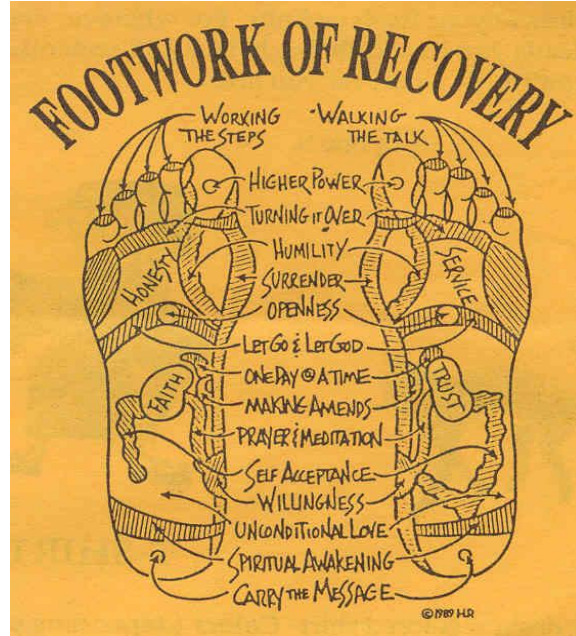
Practicing mindfulness can help you to be more focused and aware of the present moment while also being more willing to experience the difficult emotions that sometimes come up. For example, mindfulness practice might help you notice your thoughts and feelings more and be able to just let them go, without labeling them as "good" or "bad" and without acting on them by avoiding or behaving impulsively.

Just like our recovery, mindfulness is a continual process. Although it may be hard to do at first, regular mindfulness practice can help you notice your thoughts and learn to take a step back from them.

Mindfulness practice can also help you develop more compassion toward yourself and others. You may be less likely to sit in judgment of your thoughts, feelings and actions. You may become less critical of yourself. Using mindfulness can help you become more aware and gentle in response to your feelings and reactions.

Area Service Announcement

- **A Glitch** - In the application which hosts the meeting Lists had an issue. It was discovered that meetings from over 2 years ago were posted as active again and the start times reset such as Hugs Not Drugs. Please check meeting lists you have to be sure it does not list IP at 4 on Saturdays this is the easiest way to identify those which should be discarded. Please relay the message so no one shows up to an empty room. 0



Share your story, poetry, experience, drawings or how recovery works for you to moco.news@cprna.org

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NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE

STRAIGHT HOPE
CHRISTINE H.