



Dulles Corridor Area
Narcotics Anonymous
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Events

Area Service
May 31, 2020
<https://zoom.us/j/599683812>

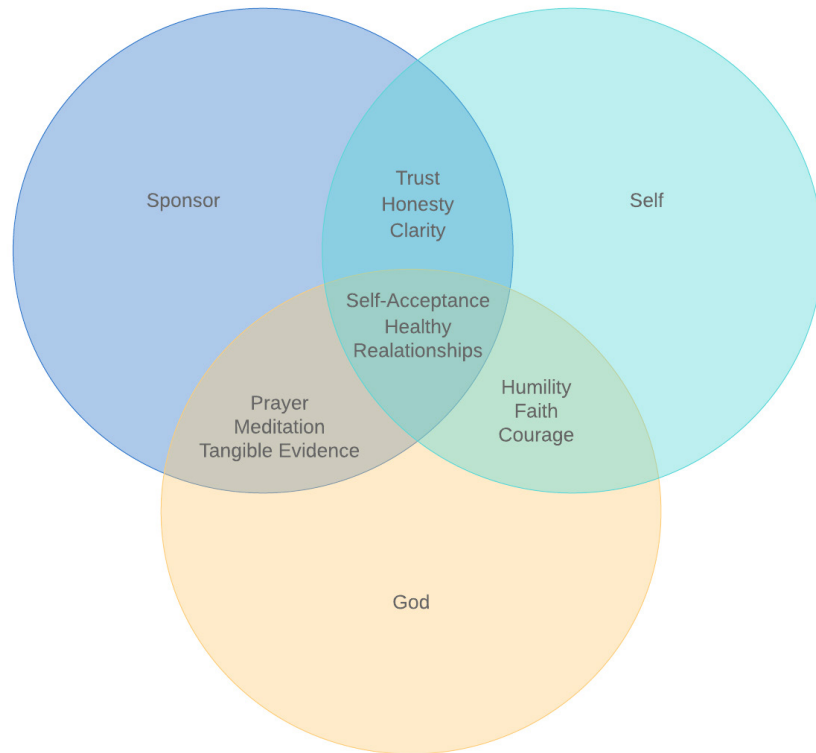
May 2020
Revised

The Group Conscience

Step Five

*We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being
the exact nature of our wrongs*

By Mikey



“Hello one newsletter subscriber. I hope this zen diagram and my experience on the fifth step bring you eternal consciousness.”

Before I start I'd like to thank the subcommittee for asking me to write this and be of service. And the Subcommittee subcommittee also. It's been hard for me to determine lately whether I should share because I returned five months ago from a relapse and while I have this experience, knowledge, a little strength and a heart full of hope my defects of character sometimes win out. However, I do have a working knowledge of the steps having been through a few cycles and experience with practical application of spiritual principles in my life. Therefore, while I am technically a newcomer I do not feel like I did when I was first introduced to the program and the desire to

use, fear and hopelessness is nonexistent. In addicts' terms, it feels like I picked up my recovery right where I left off just like with the using. Yes I have some unmanageability but clean time does not exempt me from that. With all of that said I do not encourage anyone to try out this out for themselves. Keep your time and your faith. This is just my authentic experience and so is the following.

My first formal fifth step was twelve or so years ago. I say formal because I try not to work a step with a sponsor and then not apply it. If anyone knows my current sponsor that is practically impossible to do anyways. Well if I

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stay in touch with him it is. Anyway, my first one was with my first sponsor ever and it came at a time in my life where I was just beaten and spiritually bankrupt and not many consequences other than that but as I've found out over time that for me those consequences are the greatest. So I decided to recovery a change and I jumped in with both feet. Fast forward, because I know everyone is busy at home doing nothing these days and doesn't have a lot of time to read, to my fourth step. It was my first fourth step and about half way through listing my resentments with people and places and institutions (Fuck the police!) and the feelings and what it affected in me (think seven sins - pride and ego being two major ones) and what part I played in those resentments the light bulb went off and I could see where it was going. It was then I began to have my first experience with self-acceptance probably in my adult life and maybe ever. Still hurting and being beaten up but fully surrendered (step 1) but with the newfound hope and trust (step 2) and courage, faith, surrender and commitment (Step 3) I was ready to finish and do Step Five. So I did.

I was living in Laguna Beach at the time and my sponsor lived in the hill so he took me to a magical place on the top where you could see 360 degrees around you. The snow-capped Saddleback mountains to my right, the California farmland behind me, the Pacific Ocean and Catalina Island to my left and the beautiful LA smog in front of me. We invited God onto that hill with us and started. He took me on an all day journey and I spilled my entire story of fears, lies, secrets and resentments. He

listened without judgement, related, and helped me identify assets. When it was all over, and I realized I was no worse than when we started, I was overcome with relief and joy and freedom that had me feeling like I could float off of that hill. I finally unloaded what I'd been holding onto my entire life and the freedom that resulted gave me a profound moment that is hard to describe. I know this isn't everyone's experience, but it was definitely mine.

A side note is that I recently found out that a good friend of mine in the program that I have known for nearly ten years also did his first fifth step with his sponsor in the same location nearly 20 years before me. Both he and I are from this region and are still in this region but we both did them out there and have been very good friends and never knew it until recently. What are the chances? Is that odd or is it God?

My second time through formally doing my fifth step was a little different. We hit that second layer that you hear of but don't understand until you do it. This time my experience was very uncomfortable because as thorough as my first one was this one went deeper. We looked at mental abuse inflicted upon me and how I felt I played a part and my sponsor help me sift through everything and showed me how I did not but that I was still defending those that did mentally abuse me. Even during the fifth step process. We also spoke of my biological father in more depth. These are just a few of the examples. Needless to say when we started I expected to have a similar feeling to the first time I did it but the exact opposite happened. I left feeling like "WTF just happened!?"

It wasn't until over time that I felt the relief. It wasn't the instant gratification that I'd come to love but I did learn that the greater the comfortability the greater the growth and while the freedom wasn't all at once this time it was eventually greater than before.

What I've learned from all of this is that the exact nature of my wrongs stems from my self-centered fear and my selfishness. My fear of not getting what I want, when I want it and how I want it. I gained some semblance of self-acceptance for the first time in my life. Even though I had been in the middle of the fellowship from the beginning I finally felt as though I was a part of something again for the first time since I was involved in sports as a kid. I felt like I belonged. Most importantly though it was the beginning of fostering healthy and meaningful relationships and it started with myself, God and another human being. It was my responsibility to continue to keep going and to pursue further growth in order to maintain those relationships as well as develop new ones. I proceeded to move onto Step Six and I also proceeded to get my ass kicked by it as well but I'll save that story for the next quarantine. Be easy, be the light, be the love! But stay six feet away while doing it.

NA pre and early history

By Jim M.

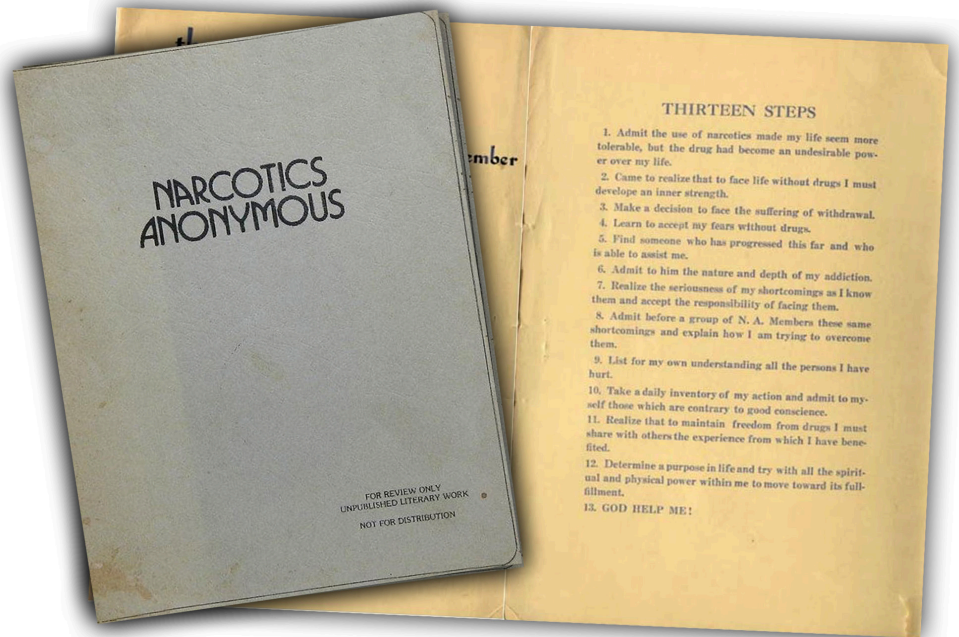
NA started in New York! I had my doubts the first time I heard this, but it's true. Narcotics Anonymous was incorporated in New York in 1950 by Danny Carlsen, among others. They had some unique challenges, such as the Rockefeller laws which made it illegal for addicts to meet for any reason, including recovery. They had no meeting lists or schedules, but attended 'rabbit meetings' in members home or other places they could meet secretly. The place and time of the next meeting would be decided at the end of the current meeting. Even with word-of-mouth, it's hard to keep a fellowship going that way.

They also had outside help. Father Dan Egan, a Graymoor Friar was a big help, and Danny was a great public relations man.

They used different versions of the 12 Steps. One version I saw was actually 13 steps. The first 12 were similar to the ones we know, but didn't mention God. The 13th step was 'God help us'

They didn't use the traditions! For that matter, neither did the NA that was formed in Southern California in 1953. They had what we would call H&I meetings, but participation might be paid. They were featured in the LA times many times, and did call in radio shows too. How's that for anonymity. By 1960, there was only one meeting left there, and they missed at least a couple weeks.

AA formally adopted the 12 traditions in 1950, but NA in LA decided to really apply them after that low point in 1960.



Left: In February of 1981 this review copy was distributed to attendees of a conference titled "World Literature Conference 3" in advance of the first hardback version.

Right: Published in the 1960's these Thirteen Steps appear in the bi-monthly publication for N.A. members at the Southern Michigan Prison in Jackson, Michigan.

It still grew very slowly. There were some meetings in the Bay Area, but the permitted you to be 'clean' even if you had an occasional drink or joint. Funny how members forget to go to meetings under those conditions.

NA became a worldwide thing in the 70s and had a huge growth spurt in the 80s, I hope to talk about that in another article. Here I want to say that NY and LA weren't the only points of origin. In the late 40s an addiction treatment effort was made at a Federal 'farm' in Lexington KY. They called themselves Addicts Anonymous or NARCO and had a newsletter called the key. The idea spread, not just thru Danny but also to a couple cities in Ohio and in Loudon, VA. It also spread from NY

to Toronto Canada, but without the traditions, none of these fellowships survived. I have met New Yorkers claiming their sponsorship family descends from Danny's fellowship, but since he and Jimmy K didn't work together I would say all of today's NA descends from the fellowship Jimmy Kinnon helped found in August 1953.

I have been a fan of NA history since before we published the Board Approved Miracles Happen coffee table book. I also toured the NA World Service office, one of my favorite exhibits was a picture of a place they used to meet over a laundromat. The meeting was known as the Spin Dry.

Here are some of the sources I also used. ~ Jim M.

- A tremendous archive sorted by year: <http://magshare.net/narchive/>
- A great presentation that tours from time to time is by Chris and Boyd, their timeline is at: <http://www.williamwhitepapers.com/pr/2011-09-13%20NA%20Chronology%20-%20Volume%20One.pdf>
- Another site I used for this article is: http://www.vvana.info/History_of_N.php

Fifth Tradition

Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers

By Lindsey J.



What is the message of NA?

NA has one message: that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live.

How we carry that message can vary member to member, but what is important is that we show the next suffering addict experience strength and hope. Letting them know that they can stay clean in the face of whatever adversity they are facing.

The group is the most powerful vehicle in the program of NA. This is how we seek out relationships, share our feelings, cry, share our struggles - but most of all how we find solutions. Our groups are autonomous, which allows them to have various formats and with members of differing backgrounds - which offers diversity and broadens our fellowship. Without

a sense of fellowship, recovery often fails. In many ways, the Fifth Tradition is all about the need to deliver this sense of fellowship to the fellow addict in recovery and to the newcomer.

In the Green and Gold it states “Effective meeting formats keep the primary purpose in focus and encourage members to participate in a way that expresses recovery. We lead by example, sharing experience instead of advice. Group members help further our purpose when they take personal responsibility for keeping the meeting recovery-oriented. All of our actions convey a message, and Tradition Five reminds us to make it a message of recovery.”

I remember coming to meetings when I had decided to get clean, and I remember the hope I felt when I

saw someone cry and then seeing the solution they found at the end of their share. Attending meetings left me feeling uplifted and hopeful. I knew that if they could make it, so could I.

I know that as a member of NA, it is my responsibility to carry a clear message of recovery. To share my pain, to share my success, and to share solutions. I never know who may need to hear that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. I know there have been times where I just needed to vent and left a mess all over the meeting floor and I was hopeless. This is something I am mindful of so that I can attempt to get help and find a solution.

NA is a group of addicts helping one another stay clean. I would like to end with this blurb from our literature - “For instance, our groups may be tempted to use meeting time to discuss their business and finances or talk about some controversy. As individual members, we can get caught up in socializing with our friends, ignoring another addict who may be in pain and needs our encouragement. But each time our focus is diverted from our primary purpose, the addict seeking recovery loses out.”

For anyone reading this, I challenge you to look at your contribution to your local groups and ask yourself, “Am I carrying the message of recovery?”

Dulles Corridor Area of NA
Our area is located in Northern Virginia and holds about 20 meetings per week in Aldie, Ashburn, Chantilly, Herndon, Leesburg, McLean, Purcellville, Reston, and Sterling.

Artists' Corner

By Alondra F.

CRYSTAL

When we first met I was your friend
but then you came to see
I'm not your friend, I am your foe,
I'm your worst enemy.
I'll take your children job and home
your husband or your wife
I will take much more than you know
I'll take over your whole life.
With me you will not eat or sleep
or even brush your hair
so whenever that you need me
I promise I'll be there.
I'll make you argue, steal and lie
I may cause you're early death,
I can help you lose a hundred pounds
my name is crystal meth.



Anniversaries

Jade

1 year
May 7
Keyhole to Recovery

Beth C.

3 Years
May 9
Rainbow Llama

Dave K.

7 years
May 11
Exact Nature

Nico A.

1 year
May 13
New Hopefuls

Tiffany H.

1 year
May 15
Just For Today

Zak G.

3 years
May 25
Exact Nature

Paul M.

16 years
June 7
The Journey Continues

Noelle H.

4 years
June 9
BYOBT

Erik B.

3 years
June 21
To Tell The Truth

Ashley M.

13 years
June 21
The Journey Continues

H&I

Oh hold due to COVID-19

Newsletter

First and Third Sundays
2:00 PM
<https://zoom.us/j/763730265>

Outreach

May 12
6:00 PM
Meeting link unavailable

Policy

Unknown

Public Information

May 2
12:00 PM
Meeting link unavailable

Special Events

First and Third Saturdays
5:30 PM
<https://zoom.us/j/987274910>

Service Calendar

Dulles Corridor Area Service

<http://www.dcana.org/>
Last Sunday
2:00-4:00 PM
<https://zoom.us/j/599683812>

C&P Regional Service

<http://www.cprna.org/>
Every second Saturday,
every other month
10:00 AM Subcommittee Meetings
12:00-5:00 PM RSC Meeting
Rotating location (by area)

Autonomy Zonal Forum

<http://autonomyzonalforum.org/>
Every six months
Two day event
Rotating location (by region)



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?

Email newsletter@dcana.org