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the heartbeat

"The heart of NA beats when two addicts share their recovery"



AN ARMY OF ANGELS

By Ed M.

Magic is defined as being any extraordinary or mystical influence, charm, or power. This can easily be found within the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous on any day and at any time. This is the power that washes over us, allowing addicts the opportunity to find solace in not using. It is said that anyone who follows our program will be rewarded with freedom from active addiction through a connection with a higher power we call "God". In this way, addicts are God's messengers...an army of angels upon the Earth.

Learning spirituality and applying its principles in our everyday lives, we become so much more than we ever thought we were capable of being. You hear many addicts say that they view addicts as extraordinary creatures, ready and willing to do anything that needs doing. I share this sentiment. I believe strongly that we were always different from normal people, that our emotional barometers were more sensitive than the rest of Earth's population. We always felt different, detached from society and never believing that anyone understood us. In desperation and a desire to fit in, we turned to foreign substances to help us feel the way we wanted. We believed ourselves powerful enough to try to control everything, including our own emotions. Ultimately, these dark forces took control and we lost touch with the power we had embedded inside us.

In coming to NA, I found a simple path to redemption. By finding a conscious contact with a higher power of my understanding and applying spiritual principles into my life I found something precious. I found myself. As my recovery grows so does this relationship with that higher power I call "God".

In looking at how the Twelve Steps work, it is interesting to point out that the steps originated with an early Judea-Christian sect that wanted to improve their contact with their Higher Power. By acting in a certain way, this sect believed that a person could cleanse themselves of mortal sin, learn to live in balance with others, and ultimately help others to find this same righteous path.

Not much as changed today. We still begin with coming to terms with our past mistakes, learning from them, and starting to live anew. We then spread the message. As it is said, each one teaches one. It is for this reason that I believe that addicts are truly special individuals. We were meant to help others and NA teaches us how to be the people we were destined to be. And that, my friends, is magic.

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G.L.A.A.S.C.

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AT the END of the DAY



At the end of the day I go into the bedroom, kneel beside my bed, and start laughing at myself, because I've gone another day without the use of drugs.

This morning I felt so physically weak from being powerless. I believe in my heart that "powerlessness" became a spiritual awakening. That I'm weak and God is strong. I realize I'm weak in every area. I'm weak spiritually; Weak when it comes to living life on life's terms; Weak in dealing with financial difficulties; Weak while being the father my daughter needs; Weak in carrying a message to the newcomers, or anybody seeking NA recovery from drug addiction. But my Higher Power is strong.

In my powerlessness, I turn to that spiritual truth and I feel my selfishness turn to surrender and I start resting in the arms of my Higher Power's strength. I can't do the things he calls me to do but he's strong enough to do them. When I am weak he is strong. Whenever I stress and worry about my problems, I'm depending on myself and denying God and His power in my life. *All I have to do is become selfless, and turn my will and my life over to God.* My "not using, no matter what" forces, no--compels me to seek to do that.

Turning my will and my life over to God, (Step Three) gives me the power to not use, no matter what.

Tony Mac

Why Are We Here ?

R	K	B	H	J	L	S	V	E	J	Y	P	O	W	E	R	L	E	S	S
B	E	H	A	V	I	O	R	K	P	S	E	I	N	V	F	K	F	B	A
V	X	A	N	H	R	U	E	S	D	I	S	C	O	V	E	R	E	D	D
S	P	F	L	H	T	G	U	E	W	S	F	Y	J	U	E	T	G	H	P
J	E	V	E	I	J	H	I	R	E	D	E	H	H	N	D	E	R	H	L
M	R	R	F	G	Z	T	K	P	D	I	L	E	M	M	A	K	E	U	A
U	I	A	D	H	M	E	F	O	A	R	L	D	E	A	R	R	L	D	Y
M	E	C	J	E	Y	D	D	G	N	F	O	F	K	N	A	V	B	V	G
R	N	M	Y	R	J	W	I	B	S	W	W	J	I	A	T	E	I	C	R
G	C	J	L	P	D	D	S	F	W	C	S	G	J	G	Y	A	S	S	O
C	E	M	I	O	V	K	E	E	O	H	T	H	E	K	C	N	T	U	
I	E	S	O	W	F	G	A	A	R	I	I	J	Y	A	I	D	O	P	N
M	D	M	M	E	V	B	S	S	S	Y	P	E	G	B	L	G	P	Q	D
U	J	E	H	R	F	G	E	V	D	R	F	S	B	L	E	J	S	D	S
L	L	L	G	E	J	H	V	E	G	N	A	H	C	E	T	H	E	C	E
S	U	B	S	T	I	T	U	T	I	N	G	D	E	A	F	G	R	V	V
H	C	O	Q	F	J	T	F	V	D	E	E	H	V	S	G	F	R	E	I
E	E	R	A	E	M	G	Z	S	S	E	N	S	S	E	L	P	L	E	H
S	G	P	K	D	E	J	A	E	E	D	J	I	O	X	D	F	E	R	D
C	H	T	D	R	E	C	O	V	E	R	I	N	G	V	Y	U	N	F	Q

- 1) REALIZED
- 2) POWERLESS
- 3) RECOVERING
- 4) PLAYGROUNDS
- 5) FELLOWSHIP
- 6) DISEASE
- 7) EXPERIENCE
- 8) HIGHER POWER
- 9) SUBSTITUTING
- 10) BEHAVIOR
- 11) HELPLESSNESS
- 12) SOUGHT
- 13) DILEMMA
- 14) UNMANAGEABLE
- 15) RESPONSIBLE
- 16) PROBLEMS
- 17) FREE
- 18) DISCOVERED
- 19) CHANGE
- 20) ANSWERS

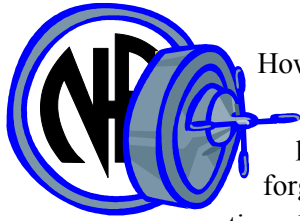
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Remember the day before you got clean?



How sad it would be to forget that day. I just celebrated twenty years clean, and over the years I have seen many people forget. Friends, sponsees, and sponsors all have forgotten what that last day of using was like. But every time I hear a newcomer, I hear someone share that day,

I remember.

It was an awful mix of hopelessness, despair, pain, and disease called active addiction. No future there, just going around in ever-decreasing circles with bigger bangs depending on the drug. I was standing at a crossroad. I wanted bigger, more powerful drugs to take away the pain, because the ones I was using had stopped working for me.

I was standing at a crossroad, but I did not know this at the time. I prayed for help to a God. I did not understand. God brought me to NA before I even knew I was an addict. I was twenty-three and spiritually and emotionally bankrupt. I knew that what awaited me on the road of active addiction were insanity and a horrible, grey, hopeless life. I was too much of a coward to live a wild life. I lived in the shadows, in fear, in denial, in the dark. I ran away—I did not do, I did not have, and I did not talk. I sat in a room by myself, living in psychedelic fantasies. I had no life; my addiction had brought me to a standstill.

And God brought me to NA—a God of hope and love. A loving, caring God that I did not understand. This was not the judgmental, intolerant, cruel, woman-hating God I had grown up with. I left that one at the door of my first meeting. He did not belong in NA.

The God I do not understand does not mind if I say God and #&"% in the same sentence. The God I do not understand has never denied me hope, has never shamed me, has never told me to leave until I can behave better. This God is unbelievably patient and tolerant, and loves all my darkness as well as my light. I know this because NA has taught me this. For me, as much as God is love, NA is hope.


I remember my first day clean. I was given an incredible gift—a profound moment of clarity in which I knew that, just for today, this was the only way for me. I do not believe I have another recovery in me. I do not believe I could find that courage again. But I also have no doubt that I could use again. So, I have no choice: Whatever it takes to not pick up is the only option open to me.

I continue to go to meetings to hear that newcomer who has just crawled across the threshold. It has not changed out there. The stories change, the drugs change, and the fine details change, but as soon as they tell me how they feel, I remember that despair, that loneliness, and that hopelessness that so characterized the life of active addiction.

I was sitting in a meeting the other day next to a twenty-one year old who was eight days clean. She was so grateful to NA for being there. I was so grateful to God for helping her there. Without her, I would forget. What a sad day it would be to forget my last day of using...

Lucinda C, *New South Wales, Australia*

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SUPPORT COMMITTEE
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ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE
Meets every 1st Monday 7:30 pm
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PUBLIC INFORMATION
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12 noon
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CONVENTION COMMITTEE
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HOSPITAL & INSTITUTION
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HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Share the Wealth

the heartbeat presents the experiences and opinions of individual members of Narcotics Anonymous. The articles you see in this newsletter are written by NA members like yourself. You need not consider yourself a skilled writer. You don't have to know all the rules of grammar. We have an editorial team whose job it is to take care of those details. What we need is your unique perspective on the NA program. Without it, we don't have a message to carry. The articles and letters do not necessarily express the philosophy of NA as a whole nor does publication imply endorsement by NA, **the heartbeat**, or the Greater Los Angeles Area of Narcotics Anonymous. **the heartbeat** assumes no responsibility to return submitted material and does not guarantee that submissions will be published. **the heartbeat** reserves the right to edit any material submitted in accordance with our review policy. The policy includes but not limited to:

- Articles should be no longer than one page handwritten or typed.
- Use of NA language of recovery.
- No profanity
- No personal attacks directed towards NA members or NA as a whole.

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1 YEAR
Bernadette M 4/23/08
Ella W 4/18/08
Donny H 4/15/08
Araceli 4/09/09
Felicia B 4/07/08
Jack H 4/04/08
Gloria S 3/31/08
James B 3/27/08
Lawana W 3/19/08
Richard W 3/13/08
Hector C 3/09/08
Jennifer M 3/03/08
Joseph E 3/03/08
Barbara M 3/01/08

2 YEARS
Demond 4/23/07
Mallory C 4/19/07
Benjamin M 4/09/07
Tenille H 3/30/07
Brenda B 3/29/07
Esmeralda P 3/22/07
Labrina P 3/22/07
Robert M 3/12/07
Jay V 3/12/07
Dawn T 3/10/07
Anthony H 3/07/07
Beverly A 3/05/07
Lucretia W 3/04/07
Patrick W 3/01/07
Analice W 3/01/07

3 YEARS
George W 4/23/06
Carolyn J 4/23/06
Wellington F 4/14/06
Gemi P 4/12/06
Devon R 4/11/06
Joseph J 4/06/06
Manuella M 4/04/06
Anthony C 4/02/06
William M 3/27/06
Carl B 3/22/06
Madrcus H 3/20/06
Lester H 3/08/06
Denise H 3/07/06
Danieha B 3/01/06
Juana G 3/01/06
Raffie D 3/01/06

4 YEARS
Donald T 4/25/05
Javier C 4/23/05
Rochelle R 4/23/05
Carla S 4/21/05
Shay C 4/17/05
Cheryl D 3/29/05
Tim C 3/28/05
Gabriel H 3/23/05
Lynn L 3/22/05
Larry W 3/18/05
Charlotte D 3/14/05
Donny H 3/09/05
Bernadette M 3/05/05
Terne B 3/04/05
Eddie J 3/02/05
Monica C 3/01/05
Adrian S 3/01/05

5 YEARS
Jo-Ann L 4/27/04
Gloria C 4/20/04
Rodriguez A 4/15/04

Hulofton R 4/05/04
Joseph J 4/03/04
Nancy P 4/02/04
Angela L 3/31/04
M. Thomas 3/19/04
Dennis O 3/17/04
Lawrence W 3/11/04
Diana H 3/02/04

6 YEARS
Wilfred S 4/27/03
Renea L 4/26/03
Sony F 4/24/03
Michael R 4/22/03
Enclear H 4/20/03
Qudar E 4/17/03
Edward E 4/17/03
Regina S 4/16/03
Reppie M 4/14/03
Michael B 4/09/03
Garret A 4/09/03
Betty M 4/09/03
Linda T 4/04/03
Cathy M 4/01/03
Gerald J 3/24/03
Renee R 3/23/03
Rob D 3/18/03
Karen S 3/18/03
Patrick S 3/17/03
Curtis J 3/16/03
Bill M 3/16/03
Josephine G 3/14/03
Jay J 3/11/03
Theolia T 3/10/03

7 YEARS
Patricia F 4/19/02
Alicija F 4/17/02
Robert G 4/15/02
Franchell J 4/14/02
Charles G 4/08/02
Robert T 4/04/02
Dino K 4/02/02
Alanna L 4/01/02
Mark B 3/29/02
Carrie D 3/28/02
Tamika B 3/28/02
James T 3/26/02
Doris W 3/25/02
Samuel J 3/24/02
Gina C 3/23/02
Charles S 3/21/02
Faurice R 3/20/02
Zack E 3/19/02
Catherine L 3/18/02
Mickey F 3/17/02
Ana A 3/17/02
Becky O 3/14/02
Ronald A 3/13/02
Juan E 3/10/02
Luther H 3/09/02
Jim M 3/07/02
Nathalia H 3/07/02
Michael T 3/05/02
Kevin J 3/01/02
Miles S 3/01/02

8 YEARS
Toy G 4/28/01
Juliette L 4/25/01
Albert G 4/24/01
Serena M 4/23/01
Gerri Mc 4/22/01

Debbie B 4/20/01
Pete R 4/20/01
Lynette P 4/17/01
Karla H 4/16/01
James S 4/06/01
Al K 4/06/01
Nicola G 4/05/01
Wilbert B 4/04/01
Donna H 4/03/01
David H 4/02/01
Debbie S 4/01/01
John S 3/28/01
Bobby L 3/28/01
Tina B 3/26/01
Alfred P 3/21/01
Ana H 3/21/01
Donny H 3/20/01
Darrell L 3/16/01
Dawn W 3/15/01
Marvin H 3/14/01
Rodney T 3/13/01
Renee C 3/10/01
Helena D 3/03/01
Greg T 3/03/01
Elouise M 3/02/01
Darryl W 3/02/01

9 YEARS
Pete D 4/28/00
Nina P. 4/19/00
Stacy F. 4/16/00
Felecia B 4/10/00
Ellen F 4/07/00
Theresa G. 4/06/00
Sylvia R 4/02/00
Lisa S 3/30/00
Warren H 3/21/00
Karen E 3/21/00
Sidney W 3/20/00
Cole P 3/17/00
John W. 3/16/00
Charles S 3/15/00
Ken S 3/10/00
Willie E 3/09/00
Michelle F 3/06/00
Nylas L 3/04/00
Cass Q 3/03/00
Anthony S 3/01/00
Cristel D. 3/01/00
Jerry S 3/01/00

10 YEARS
Carleen B. 4/26/99
Francine M. 4/23/99
Doris T. 4/19/99
Christina P 4/10/99
Rhandi J 4/10/99
Darla C. 4/08/99
Cecil H. 4/06/99
Priscilla J. 4/05/99
Olillian M. 4/04/99
James C 4/01/99
Joseph G. 4/01/99
Lovanda S. 3/29/99
Wolf 3/23/99
Patricia R. 3/21/99
Gwen T. 3/11/99
Mitchell P. 3/11/99
Tina W 3/11/99
Linda S. 3/09/99
Sarita G. 3/09/99
Michael W 3/05/99
Michael T 3/05/99
Linda S 3/03/99

Steve B 3/03/99
Willie S 3/01/99
Jerry S 3/01/99

11 YEARS
Cynthia S. 4/30/98
Robert B. 4/23/98
Karen G. 4/21/98
Jackie Y. 4/15/98
Alvin C. 4/12/98
Robert E. 4/05/98
Earnest F 3/16/98
Emily S. 4/03/98
Lenore R. 4/02/98
Bernice C. 4/01/98
Patricia R. 3/28/98
Mark C. 3/24/98
Kimberly W. 3/22/98
Richard S 3/18/98
Rodney J. 3/16/98
Bridget T. 3/16/98
Sharon D. 3/13/98
Tonie J 3/07/98
Denise L. 3/06/98
Robert D. 3/05/98
James W 3/05/98

12 YEARS
Nicole J. 4/28/97
Lionel J. 4/25/97
Derek S. 4/18/97
Marcia R 4/18/97
Gina R. 4/12/97
Hal G. 4/12/97
Reginald W. 4/07/97
Manuel C. 4/04/97
Tommy M. 4/04/97
Tracii P. 4/04/97
Bill P. 4/03/97
Debbie S. 4/03/97
Charles K. 3/30/97
John S. 3/29/97
Debi M. 3/18/97
Robin G. 3/14/97
Keith D. 3/10/97
Alvitas R 3/09/97
Zina C 3/08/97
Jackie B. 3/07/97
Mark N. 3/07/97
Bobby T. 3/04/97
Milton G. 3/03/97

13 YEARS
Ivan M. 4/25/96
Tommy H 4/23/96
Tanya T 4/10/96
Willie J 4/10/96
Gayle J. 4/04/96
Tracey J. 4/03/96
Charles K. 3/30/96
Venora S. 3/23/96
Gathon M. 3/18/96
Batimac 3/12/96
Yvette N. 3/11/96
Pam C. 3/05/96
James H. 3/01/96

14 YEARS
Daniel T 4/27/95
Charlene W 4/25/95
Darryle A 4/22/95
Philip J. 4/18/95
Tanya L. 4/17/95
Monroe C 4/10/95
Earl L 4/09/95

Dianne C. 4/02/95
Dana B. 3/20/95
James J 3/16/95
Simone N 3/14/95
Cornelius A. 3/13/95

15 YEARS
Danny T. 4/24/94
Joe J. 4/19/94
Scharmaine Y 4/10/94
Keith C 3/17/94
Renee D. 3/14/94
Carolyn K. 3/08/94
William H. 3/02/94

16 YEARS
Carl A 4/27/93
Robert C. 4/17/93
Ragail H. 4/14/93
Richard M. 3/04/93

17 YEARS
Barry R. 4/14/92
Billy M. 4/04/92
Aubrey T. 4/01/92
Tara F. 3/31/92
Bruce H 3/23/92

18 YEARS
Harley B. 4/07/91
Lynn E. 4/05/91
Alex B. 3/15/91
Wayne A 3/14/91

19 YEARS
Gary G. 4/21/90
Helen M. 4/07/90
Renita G. 3/21/90
Daniel W. 3/01/90

20 YEARS
Keenan G 4/18/89
Charles C. 4/15/89
Orenda W. 3/21/89
Joyce C 3/20/89

21 YEARS
Tania R 3/25/88
Tony Mac 3/19/88
Sharleen F. 3/17/88
Jessie J 3/10/88
Joi F. 3/10/88
Cedric G. 3/04/88
Frankie R 3/02/88

22 YEARS
Leon A. 4/16/87
Pat W. 3/19/87
Todd K. 3/17/87

23 YEARS
Lee R 4/03/86

24 YEARS
Shareef A. 3/28/85
Sally H. 3/11/85

28 YEARS
Carlos G 3/25/81

29 YEARS
Jackie W 3/26/80