

JULY/AUG 2009

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the heartbeat

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

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ACCEPTABILITY IS NOT RECOVERY

By Will

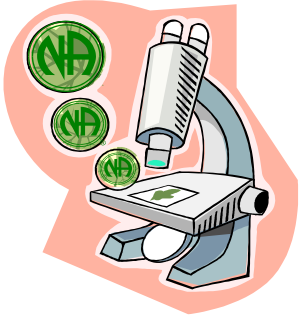
For a long time I was "socially acceptable" if not "socially successful". But I was not recovered. From looking at me, however, you couldn't tell how bad drugs were still haunting my inner life: I was neat, clean-cut, and well-spoken. I wore the tight clothes, said the tight things at the tight times, and was successful in my respective positions as sales trainer, manager and finally, franchise owner . I came to many of the meetings around town -- just to observe, I told myself, because I had gotten a handle on my problem. Often I found myself nodding in agreement with the things I heard and then after a while simply nodding off (I would always make sure to sit somewhere I wouldn't be noticed -- way in the back, or in the shadows, under poor lighting). I tried "to walk the talk" but the talk I was trying to walk was merely something I parroted back to those I wanted to be accepted by or was trying to impress. Inside, I was filled with longing and frustration; I even dreamed about the good of drug days --although I knew they hadn't been good at all and were the foundation for what almost destroyed me. Yet I didn't feel right ... I just faked right.

And sometimes faking it till you make it just doesn't work. It wasn't until I slipped back into the bottle -- both prescription and vodka -- until I had lost everything -- including a roof over my head and, most of all, my health -- that I realized I was going to have to be real about this recovery thing. Work, religion, love and especially "social acceptability" just wasn't enough. I was going to have to face the truth -- The Truth -- and make that my Higher Power. And the truth was I was tired ... tired of all the bull I waded knee-deep in. I made a decision at at point, with the help of my Higher Power, to live my life cleanly, simply, and clean, and to stop hiding in my addictions. Because in the end there is nowhere to hide.

You see, that Higher Power we all keep referring to -- God ... Well, the truth is the name of God is Reality.

A Teeny Bit of Desire

A few days ago, I found myself at a halfway house NA meeting picking up a key tag as a sign of surrender. I was 3 days clean and wanted to go to a meeting and get a white chip bad. I have over a quarter of a century clean in Narcotics Anonymous but I was detoxing from over 4 months of prescribed narcotics from an informed physician (I latter found out he was in recovery) for extreme physical pain. I had gone through back surgery just a week prior and had been on shots of the good stuff along with pills for the next few days but at long last my leg pain had gotten down to tolerable levels and I knew it was time to get clean. I didn't even have to give the bottle of extra pills I had squirreled away if things got really bad to my wife for another day, they where right next to my desk (okay I am still an addict.. smile), as I had zero desire to use, even with the monkey on my back just like the good old days. I did give her the bottle on day two, letting her know I did need stuff like this around me at all. Just like the Basic Text had told me, my body did not know the difference between drugs prescribed to me by a Doctor for pain and those I prescribed to



myself to get high, amen brother. Truer words where never said. The only difference was that my spirit and my heart where clean through all of those months of medication. My phone still rang with NA members that I sponsored, my emails still came from NA sponsees overseas, and my vision hardly turned to character defects for survival in the whole time I had to use what I had to use.

I got to that meeting about 45 minutes early as I had mixed the time up, but apparently God hadn't. They let me come in the house and I sat down next to a guy who had two days clean, man did I know just how he felt! We talked about recovery and staying clean one day at a time in the rooms. I got up to go back to where they held the NA meeting to find some of my friends setting up the room. We had some hugs and chats, then they started the meeting in the usual manner with the readings and the Just For Today page for that day. As I sat in that chair, I looked back to the me that walked into his 1st Narcotics Anonymous meeting in 1981 and had a flash of recall just what it felt to be in blue pajamas kicking dope at your very first NA meeting. Only this wasn't 1981, it was 2008 and I was still clean by the grace of God and the program of Narcotics Anonymous. A huge wave of gratitude came over me as I stood up and picked up a white chip to show that just for today, I had a desire to stay clean. Tears are streaming down my face as I type this letter to you my worldwide family, because you all know just how precious that desire is and what NA can do with a sorry low life like me, as long as we have just the smallest bit of desire.

The truth is that the guy who picked up that white chip the other night, had over a quarter of a century of faith, hope and an incredible track record of successes in his life from staying clean. That guy who picked up that white chip in 1981 had nothing but a burning desire to stop hurting.

Isn't it a miracle what NA and God can do with just a teeny bit of desire.

In loving service,
Anonymous

- ◇ **I walk down a road. There is a hole. I fall in.**
- ◇ **I walk down the road. I see the hole, but I fall in anyway**
- ◇ **I walk down the road. I see the hole and try to stay away but some how I fall in. I hate it in here.**
- ◇ **I walk down the road. I keep as far away from that hole as I possibly can. I think I can keep from falling in, but somehow I fall in anyway. I really hate being in this hole again.**
- ◇ **I walk down a different road.**



Back down memory lane

I was introduced to NA in 2005. I was so excited about being clean, going to meetings, listening to another addict sharing his/her experience, strength and hope. I knew without a doubt I would be able to make this process work for me. I came here in so much pain and very little hope that all I knew was, I didn't want to feel the gut wrenching pain that I had felt prior to coming here. So I did what was suggested, kept coming to meetings, being of service, got a sponsor and tapped into a power greater than myself. I did that for two years, all of sudden I forgot about the gut wrenching pain I felt, that brought me to these rooms, the Higher Power I did tap into. I started to remember what it felt like to be in a relationship before the pain became my Higher Power. Before I knew it I was going back down memory lane. The pain came back I stopped listening and I didn't want to take any suggestions. I was no longer grateful. Relapse today is a part of my story. I am happy to be back. Thank you NA.





DEAR MYSTERY SPONSOR

Question:

I have a problem giving out N.A. hugs. Some men want to give me kisses or say sly remarks while hugging me. I've stated time and time again how I don't like this behavior and not do it again to the offenders. This works, however, a newcomer will come along with hidden agendas and steal a hug. It was told to me that this "hugging is the N.A. way". How can I handle this?

The Child of N.A.

Response:

Dear Child of N.A.

Only you decide what behaviors are acceptable in your life and prepare to participate in the process and outcome/consequences of those decisions. You've made a decision not to hug men. Fine. Tradition Five makes a positive point in your favor on page 163 in *It Works: How And Why*. "Members can do many things to further our willingness to help by taking turns greeting people at the door..." Your decided how to greet people. You will hug women and not men. Some alternative options for greeting men N.A.: A smile with a hello & nod of the head, keep your hands down at your sides, folded together at waist level, cross your arms, or around your waist. (As a last resort put yourself and state, in a kind and loving way, "Welcome, men with the men, women with the women." You can extend your hand and initiate a friendly give everyone a hug.

Somewhere in N.A.'s history, someone coined the phrase "Hugs not drugs" and so it became an ongoing behavior in our N.A. fellowship worldwide. It represents our unconditional love. We will love you until you learn to love yourself. So remember to stand for something or you will fall for anything. You have a principle, discuss it with your sponsor and demonstrate it in your behavior. All will know by your outward sign. You have this principle and it commands respect.

Dear Guru

My sponsor told me to call her every day. Why should I have to do that? She also said to get a list of phone numbers from other women. What do I do with the list? Sincerely, Phone-A-Phobic

Dear Phone-A-Phobic,

First, I would like to congratulate you for getting a sponsor. For many of us, asking someone to be our sponsor was the first step toward recovery, because in doing so we admit that "I can't. But we can." (*It Works: How and Why*, PG. 13)

Calling your sponsor every day is a common suggestion, and one that will help you in four ways:

1. You learn to break the old habit of isolating because you are asked to reach out to someone (your sponsor) on a daily basis.
2. It helps develop your relationship with your sponsor. One that is built on mutual trust and respect.
3. Your sponsor wants her recovery enough that she knows she can only keep what she has by giving it away.
4. If you feel like using, you'll hopefully be in the habit to call your sponsor first.

Now, about that list of phone numbers: Use it! Sometimes you might not be able to reach your sponsor. Having a list of phone numbers gives you someone else to reach out to. You never know when some name and number on a meeting list might save your life.

My Recovery

By Keyshawn P

My recovery has made me manageable,
 honest, and full of profound power
 I feel as if I have the courage
 to climb the Eiffel Tower
 There's nothing but positive
 progression in my life
 No more obsessions,
 no more depression,
 no more strife

My recovery has restored my sanity,
 my faith, and my belief
 Thanks to a Power
 Greater than myself
 I now have relief
 Today I am willing to live
 my life without dope
 I have no reason to isolate myself
 for there is hope
 Being open-minded
 has made me humble
 Applying my spiritual principles
 will not allow me to stumble
 Through humility,
 I'm able to understand God
 I will give him my life and my will
 It's because of Him and Him alone
 that I will be active yet stand still
 Today I will be vigilant
 and trust in the decisions that I've made
 I will work the Twelve Steps
 Just so my faith won't fade
 I will have trust in my sponsor's guidance
 and live one day at a time,
 According to God's Will
 The opportunity will arise for me to shine

Greater Los Angeles Area Activities Committee
 Sat, August 1, 2009 10AM - 6PM

BBQ Dinners for donations

SUMMER MADNESS

Games for Kids & Adults

PICNIC

For info contact: Barry R (323) 839-2979 Rocky W (323) 242-7960

LADERA PARK
 6027 Ladera Park Avenue



E-Mail us: theheartbeat@glaana.org



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

1 YEAR

Brandy F 8/28/08
Nataxa C 8/24/08
Sherri W 8/23/08
Janna A 8/17/08
James E 8/13/08
Jamesha R 7/29/08
Michael T 7/23/08
Michelle N 7/19/08
Jamal 7/15/08
Debrina P 7/14/08
Carolyn H 7/12/08
Christie C 7/06/08

2 YEARS

Darleen C 8/23/07
Anton M 8/20/07
Sharon B 8/20/07
Lillie O 8/18/07
Annamarie L 8/11/07
Darryl M 8/10/07
Durrell C 7/26/07
Annie C 7/20/07
Iris H 7/20/07
AC 7/20/07
Patricia B 7/18/07
James B 7/14/07
Traci M 7/12/07
Dyannell P 7/07/07
Robert M 7/04/07
Ron P 7/02/07

3 YEARS

Larry S 8/28/06
Latanya C 8/27/06
Bill W 8/26/06
May S 8/22/06
Karl A 8/21/06
Gwen B 8/18/06
Joe J 8/07/06
Timothy S 8/01/06
Emmett B
Derrick M 7/25/06
Donna R 7/15/06
James J 7/14/06
Yvette G 7/11/06
Blanche J 7/07/06
Diana H 7/05/06
Leroy Y 7/04/06
Tim S 7/01/06

4 YEARS

Francisco S 8/16/05
Beverly G 8/15/05
Willie L 8/05/05
Donald M 8/05/05
LaNecia J 8/03/05
Jay B 7/17/05
George T 7/11/05

5 YEARS

Darryl G 8/19/04
Rhonda T 8/14/04
James D 8/19/04
Enrique L 8/08/04
Latanya H 8/07/04
Erwin T 8/06/04
Robert R 8/05/04
Felix P 8/05/04
Kevin P 8/04/04
Alphonse W 8/03/04
Herman A 8/03/04
Al W. 8/02/04
Myra P 7/28/04
Rosemary 7/23/04
Paula R 7/16/04
Tom H 7/13/04
Kimberly T 7/06/04
Yvette W 7/01/04

6 YEARS

Shantea S 8/29/03
Janet W 8/26/03

Jessie G 8/24/03
Lee J 8/18/03
Winnetra C 8/18/03
Rick G 8/11/03
Samuel S 8/10/03
Claudia C 8/06/03
Mesha H 8/04/03
Stephen L 8/04/03
Rufus W 8/03/03
Felecia B 8/01/03
Elizabeth W 7/31/03
Gary C 7/26/03
Geraldine Mc 7/22/03
Kenneth M 7/19/03

Ollie B 7/19/03
Lynn T 7/18/03
Taylor L 7/17/03
Barbara M 7/16/03
Tyrone M 7/12/03
Kenneth M 7/11/03
Morgan E 7/08/03
Lynn T 7/04/03

7 YEARS

Derek T 8/25/02
January S 8/23/02
Cynthia C 8/23/02
Linda H 8/20/02
Jerry K 8/14/02
Kimberly T 8/12/02
Gwendolyn D 8/09/02
Gregory W 8/07/02
Marlon G 8/07/02
Nicole G 8/06/02
DeAndre T 8/06/02
Brenda B 8/06/02
Debra B 7/26/02
Ana N 7/25/02
Djakhangir A 7/25/02
Rhonda C 7/22/02
Serena C 7/17/02
Rachelle B 7/16/02
Andrea R 7/15/02
Ricky T 7/10/02
Willie R 7/07/02
Bobby M 7/04/02
Maurice C 7/01/02

8 YEARS

Ivan T 8/31/01
Sharon Y 8/17/01
Charles J 8/15/01
Sharon R 8/14/01
Paris P 8/09/01
Henry P 8/09/01
Brian P 8/07/01
Dana K 8/05/01
Cynthia S 8/01/01
LaNette B 7/30/01
James T 7/22/01
Wali W 7/19/01
Celanese T 7/17/01
Howard W 7/16/01
David H 7/15/01
George S 7/11/01
Margaret W 7/08/01
Tammy C 7/06/01

9 YEARS

Vaughn H 8/30/00
Patricia C 8/29/00
Raymond L. 8/24/00
Earl G 8/18/00
Scott P. 8/16/00
Rhonda T 8/14/00
Tyra T 8/13/00
Eddie B. 8/12/00
David W. 8/09/00
Denise C. 8/08/00
Vaughn H 8/08/00
Matthew M. 7/31/00
Belinda V 7/31/00

Belinda W 7/30/00
Marvin H 7/28/00
Elizabeth D. 7/25/00
Tone A 7/24/00
LaCretia E. 7/22/00
Earl G. 7/18/00
Doreen S 7/10/00
Sarah H. 7/06/00
Shirley R. 7/05/00

10 YEARS

Eddy L. 8/31/99
Lisa T 8/20/99
Laura M 8/20/99
Susan G 8/17/99
Billie S. 8/13/99
Robert B. 8/11/99
Richard J. 8/05/99
Remona J. 8/03/99
Glen C. 8/03/99
Greg J. 7/26/99
Sheila T. 7/16/99
William J. 7/05/99
Charlotte T. 7/2/99

11 YEARS

Mary S 8/30/98
Johnny N. 8/24/98
Larry W. 8/22/98
Alvin J. 8/19/98
Maria K 8/10/98
Aaron R. 8/09/98
Artimus J. 8/07/98
Sonia B. 8/07/98
Clifton S 8/01/98
Jezette B. 7/30/98
Charlotte F. 7/27/98
Joe S 7/15/98
Marcus M. 7/13/98
Angelus W. 7/12/98
Kenneth K. 7/05/98
Faith A. 7/04/98

12 YEARS

Catherine C 8/23/97
Mark B. 8/21/97
Linda H. 8/19/97
Patricia W. 8/09/97
Jonathan J. 8/09/97
Stephanie M. 8/08/97
Christopher H. 8/02/97
Tracie H. 7/26/97
Taryn G. 7/26/97
Ronald R. 7/24/97
Jackie T. 7/24/97
Rebecca L. 7/16/97
Alma E. 7/15/97
Ricky W. 7/11/97
Linda M. 7/10/97
Nina L. 7/10/97
Jamaine W. 7/02/97

13 YEARS

Michele S 8/19/96
Cynthia G. 8/12/96
Stephanie M 8/08/96
Yvonne F. 8/06/96
Della H. 7/25/96
Dana S. 7/24/96
Phyllis H. 7/23/96
Tracy R. 7/17/96
Jamal J. 7/15/96
Rosalind R.W. 7/14/96
Kermis H. 7/09/96
Alicia H 7/04/96

14 YEARS

Chuck M. 8/27/95
Patricia H 8/15/95
Kim W. 8/14/95
Billy B. 8/10/95
Elliot B. 8/10/95
Keenan M. 8/08/95
Saundra M. 8/04/95
Sandra A. 8/01/95
Robert B. 8/01/95
Vickie Jo D 7/10/95

Yolanda G. 7/10/95
Gary H. 7/07/95

15 YEARS

Diamond 8/23/94
Margaret T. 8/18/94
Valerie J. 8/17/94
Latricia B. 8/12/94
Trish C 8/12/94
Conrad R. 8/08/94
Harvey C 7/29/94
Camille T. 7/24/94
Nina L 7/10/94
Kenn T 7/05/94
Paul W. 7/01/94

16 YEARS

Roy M. 8/31/93
Debbie B. 8/17/93
William F 8/16/93
Fredrika P. 8/15/93
Juana B. 8/15/93
Daryl J. 7/24/93
Danny H. 7/23/93
Keith L 7/22/93
Willie M. 7/12/93
Ricardo W. 7/09/93
Arlisa B. 7/07/93
Candace V. 7/03/93

17 YEARS

Tommy C. 8/26/92
Debra F. 8/04/92
Charles H. 7/24/92
Ron R. 7/24/92
Bessie L. 7/23/92
John B. 7/11/92

18 YEARS

Derwin J. 8/19/91
John C 7/23/91
Michael A. 7/19/91
Carole B 7/12/91
Willie H. 7/09/91

19 YEARS

Ted B. 8/09/90
Michele L. 8/01/90
Michelle B. 7/28/90
Brooks W. 7/26/90
Mary J. 7/16/90
Ellen H 7/16/90

20 YEARS

Linda H 8/28/89
Mark D. 8/13/89
Maria K 8/10/88
Ron S. 7/25/89
Marlene E. 7/16/89
Jeff from Miami 7/16/89
Terri L. 7/12/89

21 YEARS

Malik H. 8/12/88
Sharon A. 7/19/88
Johnny P. 7/07/88

22 YEARS

Gerald C. 8/12/87
Vanessia K. 8/04/87
Phillip B. 7/18/87
Mike M 7/10/87
Rikki J. 7/09/87
Floyd J. 7/07/87

23 YEARS

Cheryl B. 8/27/86
Don M. 7/24/86
Rhonda T 7/05/86
Diana H 7/05/86

24 YEARS

Frank P 8/16/85

25 YEARS

Travis S 8/16/84
Jimmy Lee 7/12/84

27 YEARS

Dawud B. 8/26/82

36 YEARS

Alex L 8/24/73

48 YEARS

Bob B. 8/12/61

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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