

September/October 2018

BAY area News

Narcotics Anonymous

Letter from the Editor:

This is one way to carry the message of recovery and to reach sick and suffering addicts. On some days that is me. Please share your stories. Share your experience strength and hope or share your art. This is your newsletter. This is your area. All you have to do is email us at: lit@bascna.org to submit something!

Thank You!

Addiction vs. Recovery

It's all about me and what I want

Lying, Cheating and Manipulating to get what I want

"I can take care of myself!"

Rationalize, justify and minimize when I'm wrong.

Projecting a false image of myself

Hide and deny my fears so as not to appear weak.

"How can I be of help to others?"

Willingness, honesty and open-mindedness allow me to get what I need.

"There is something bigger than me."

Owning my part, admitting my faults and trying to grow from them.

I am no better and no less than anyone else.

Acknowledging my fears and limitations and asking for help.



24-Hour Helpline **888-779-7117** Call before you use!

The Man in the Glass

When you get what you want in your struggle for self and the world makes you king for a day

Just go to a mirror and look at yourself and see what that man has to say

For it isn't your father or mother or wife whose judgment upon you must pass

For the fellow whose verdict counts most in your life is the one staring back from the Glass

Some people might think you're a straight shootin chum and call you a wonderful guy

But the man in the Glass says you're only a bum, if you can't look him straight in the eye

He's a fellow to please, never mind all the rest for he's with you clear to the end

And you have passed your most dangerous test if the guy in the Glass is your friend

You may fool the whole world down the pathway of years and get pats on the back as you pass

But your final reward will be heartache and tears if you've cheated the man in the glass

In Memory of Brian M.

1986 - 2018



Dancing With the Beast: By Linda D.

My first meeting of the New Year was a revelation. The revelations have been non-stop...amazing, God filled, tiny miracles—revelations for two days. Traditionally, I call this shift a “transformation”. Using the word “revelation” to describe my frame of mind, body, and soul could be misconstrued as a reference to the Holy Bible—the book of Revelations. The reference may make a Christian cringe. That particular book focuses on end of times, and that’s a whole other topic. Either way, I don’t want to break tradition, so let’s just say I was feeling undeniably amazing. After eleven long months of being ill in one way or another, I was having wonderful...here we go again...revelations. I can feel the presence of God again.

This makes life worth living. The first guy to share in the meeting opened with, “I’m so sick of meetings on fu%\$#g gratitude.”

You hate meetings on gratitude because you aren’t grateful.

Here we are, right in the middle of a grand opportunity to reinvent ourselves and reboot a new year, and this is the best this guy has to throw out there.

Maybe he has good reason for not being grateful.

Immediately, I realize that I am feeling calm—not irritated. I am having the revelation of compassion for a sick and suffering addict.

This is what they have been talking about for all these years?

He apologized for poopooing all over the meeting. Instead of going to an uplifting meeting for the New Year celebration, I was in a meeting where the guys were so unhappy and miserable that all they could do was dump.

Just don’t get loaded.

One guy complained that his mother wanted him to work on her house for free. This statement was the only time I slipped into judgment—I wasn’t irritated, I was judging. Mom gets everything. The woman who worried herself into a psychiatric institution more that once should get EVERYTHING!

My dear old friend, Crying Bob, invited me to the meeting as his homegroup was sponsoring the 8-10 AM slot at the 24 Hour Room. He told me there would be hot, fresh bagels with cream cheese and doughnuts. I probably wasn’t even there for a reboot, jumpstart to the New Year meeting. I was there for a hot, fresh bagel.

Oh my goodness was that bagel good.

After I ate my toasted, pumpernickel with cream cheese, I shared: “I was high Thursday, and it didn’t frighten me as much as it reminded me where old-timer addicts go to die: as the result of surgery and prescription medication”.

When the beast asked me to dance, I said “no.” I took measures to ensure that I would not let my addiction come alive.

If you feed the beast, he will kill you.

The beast destroys lives and families. I really don’t want to end up a statistic, so I plan meetings every day. I made a list of my support network and keep it on my desk. I hadn’t done that in ten years. Nearly 23 years without pain medication, and now I’m taking pain meds. I won’t feed the beast, but I did name him. He is called Gorilla Joe. I know that if I feed Gorilla Joe, he will dance in my chest.

I feel the transformation taking over, pulling me away from the old into unknown...unknown friends and sponsors and lovers and co-workers. I feel my spirit coming back to life. I honor the spiritual principles of the second and third steps. I am bathed in faith and hope.

These revelations are worlds away from where I was a few days ago. For months, I struggled with health issues which prevented me from work. I have to quit my career of twenty years doing massage and healing others. I nearly gave my weapons to a trusted friend because my brain told me I was better off dead. I ate. I grieved. I slept.

The New Year is an unpainted landscape. It is for me. It’s an empty canvas where we reinvent ourselves. We can pick the colors and scenes. We have more hope for a prosperous future. We hope and long for true love. I do. I am optimistic. I believe.

The ungrateful guy who shared and apologized at the bagel meeting is facing his demons. He doesn’t need me to tell him he’s sick. He certainly didn’t need me to shoot daggers and bad jou jou at him. He needed me to tell him to keep sharing—no matter what. If it keeps him from getting loaded one more day, dump it all. Leave it in the room. Keep sharing the secrets. The anger. The fear. Get naked and let recovery wash over you. Most of all: get well soon.



ANNIVERSARIES

September

Linda D, A Grateful Addict, 24 years
Aaron S, We Do Recover, 6 years
Mike S, Living Clean, 6 years
Liz R, Welcome Home, Sept 1st, 1 year
Paul B, Always Here, Sept 1st, 13 years
Samuel B, SYA, Sept 2nd, 3 years
Megan G, What Can I Do?, Sept 6th, 6 years
Sharon C, Women in Recovery, September 8th, 17 years
Manny M, SYA, Sept 11th, 4 years
Debbie L, Relax & Recover, Sept 13th, 2 years
Vickie R, Women in Recovery, September 14th, 7 years
Jackie S, Women in Recovery September 15th, 27 years
Ashley C, Morning Serenity, Sept 14th, 1 year
Alex T, SIA; Sept 15th, 2 years
Bert Y, Welcome Home, Sept 15th, 35 years
Paul S, How Group, Sept 16th, 8 years
Ken T, Welcome Home, Sept 18th, 26 years
Alex B, Resurrender, Sept 19th, 1 year
David A, Welcome Home, Sept 20th, 11 years
Kaila W, Just for Today, Sept 28th, 2 years
Melissa D, WOW, Sept 29th, 2 years
Shannon W, Soul Sisters, Sept 30th, 6 years

October

Robin O, SYA, Oct 6th, 3 years
Kevin B, Welcome Home, Oct 6th, 31 years
Bobby H, SIA, Oct 11th, 2 years
Steve D, Relax & Recover, Oct 11th, 31 years
Tim G, Change Starts Here, Oct 12th, 6 years
Alice N, SYA, Oct 13th, 12 years
Clay F, SYA, Oct 17th, 15 years
Allen C, It Works, Oct 19th, 6 years
Dave T, Welcome Home, Oct 22nd, 30 years

November

Scott K, Welcome Home, Nov 4th, 15 years
Debbie B, SYA, Nov 5th, 15 years
Rodney F, Relax & Recover, Nov 5th, 24 years
Kelly C, Relax & Recover, Nov 7th, 6 years
Kim G, Relax & Recover, Nov 7th, 8 years
Joe S, SYA, Nov 11th, 27 years
Jackie J, Breaking Free, Nov 12th, 9 years
Patty S, Soul Sisters, Nov 19th, 5 years
Sharon L, Miracles Happen, Nov 20th, 21 years

We publish the clean dates that are supplied to area service by your homegroup GSR. You may also submit your clean dates by emailing them to lit@basrna.org.



WELCOME HOME GROUP

St. Catherine's Church
1955 S Belcher Rd, Clearwater, FL 33764

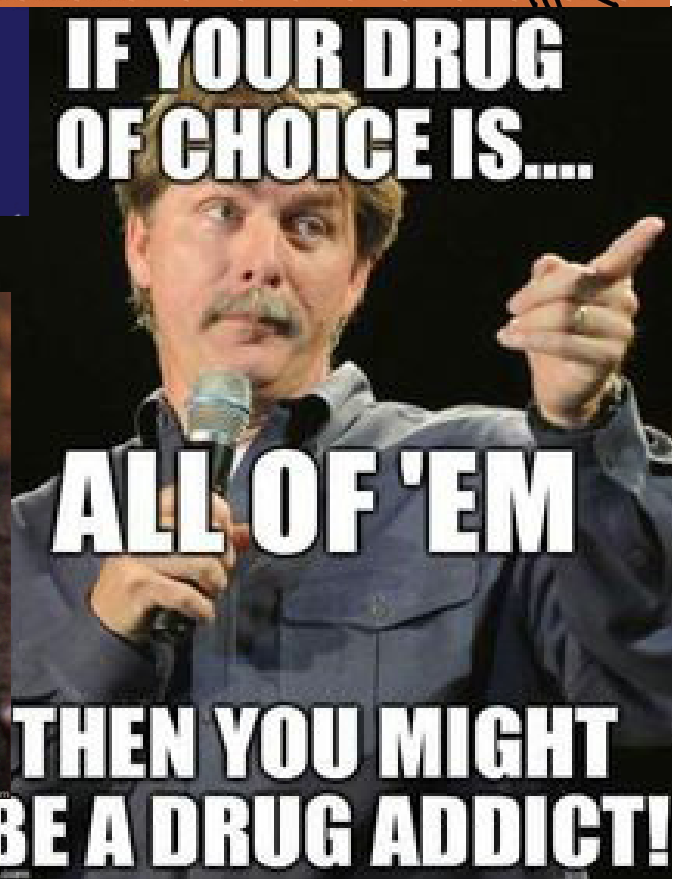
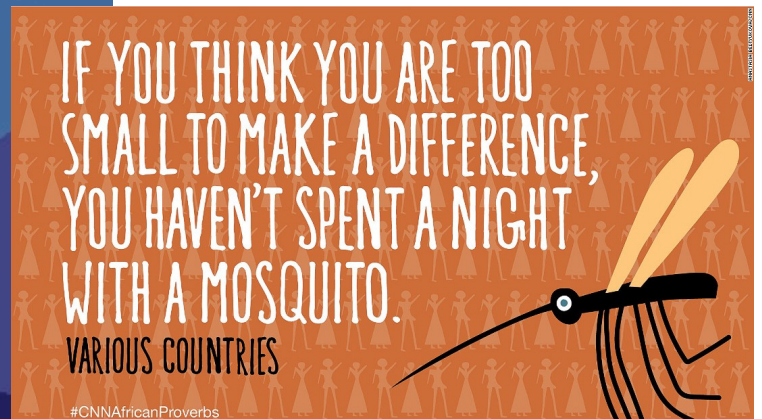
Food and Fellowship at Owen's Home Group
followed by its regularly scheduled 7:45 pm Meeting
Please bring a dish to share

NA is not affiliated with this facility

A Grateful Addicts Journey

Out of ways & means, at the end of the road.
Remembering when, just a few months ago,
Was at a meeting when a seed was planted.
Had lost the desire, took it for granted.
Was clean for a month, thought I was cured.
That was a delusion, I could not afford.
Was in denial, had no clue
What that next one would ultimately do.
Did not listen to what I was told.
My disease had progressed a hundredfold.
Utter insanity, caught in the grip.
Hating myself trip after trip.
Using against my will, beyond belief.
No matter how much I used, there was no relief.
The guilt, the shame and the pain would not go away,
Asking myself, why didn't I stay?
Beaten, broken, desperate, lost.
Had to get clean, no matter what the cost.
Gave up, gave in, let it all go.
Had to stop using, for me, there was no tomorrow.
Needed help, didn't know where to begin.
Found a shelter for addicts, checked myself in.
Slept on a mat in a room freezing cold.
Humbled myself, did what I was told.
Kept to myself, stayed away from fools.
Gave up my will & my life, followed the rules.
H & I brought in a meeting, gave me some hope
That I could live life without any dope.
They left me with a smile, grateful to be clean.
I knew some day I would be living that dream.
So I did what they did to get what they had.
Got with my sponsor, put pen to pad.
Dug in, dug deep, got the garbage out.
Got to know myself again & what my life was about.
Found meaning & purpose, so much to give.
Changed everything, found a new way to live.
Meetings, service, middle of the boat.
On a pink cloud, I would float.
Freedom, blessings, a life so sweet.
Somewhere I belong, my existence complete.
So I won't use just for today.
I love recovery, think I'll just stay.
Forever grateful to the program of NA
For the people who helped me along the way.
With complete surrender & gratitude, I can't lose.
The literature says so & a grateful addict will never use.

LOL



ACTIVITIES

Bay Area:

Monster Ball

When- Oct 27

Where- Terra Nova

Time- 6pm-11pm

~Chili Cookoff & Bakeoff before the meeting



Anthony Bourdain RIP

I still have a voice in my head that lies to me. It says I would feel better if I used this or used that. It says if I learned more or I got a better job I would feel better. It says I wouldn't have all these problems if I had more money. It says, no one can understand me because my situation is so different. With the recent sorrowful death (June 8, 2018) of American celebrity chef, Anthony Bourdain, I am counting my blessings for my life in Narcotics Anonymous.

My spouse loved Anthony Bourdain's programs on CNN. I didn't even want to watch them. I would be sucked into the episodes by Bourdain's persuasive endearing voice narrating his adventures. In his shows, he traveled around the world, sampled local foods and made friends.

The shows are fascinating but also there is darkness. Only Bourdain can say if he was an addict. But Bourdain readily admitted to his heroin addiction in the 70s and 80s and his crack-cocaine addiction in the 90s and he regularly used terms like "self-loathing." I was saddened that every episode showed Bourdain getting drunk. I have read stories that Bourdain's crew carried him back to the hotel each time he passed out. I've also read he used prescription medication and marijuana for relaxing.

- Bourdain was worth \$16 million
- Bourdain said, "I have the best job in the world." In his career, he had 8 Nonfiction and 5 fiction books published. Bourdain starred on the Food Network's "A Cook's Tour", on the Travel Channel's "No Reservations", The Travel Channel's "The Layover" and on CNN "Parts Unknown".
- Anthony Bourdain won Food Writer of the Year in 2001, Food Book of the Year in 2002, Who's Who of Food and Beverage in America, Creative Arts Emmy Award, Honorary Clio Award, Critics' Choice Best Reality Series, an Emmy Award Each year from 2013 to 2016, and the coveted Peabody Award.
- Bourdain went to college for 2 years before following his dream. He graduated from The Culinary Institute of America in 1978.
- Bourdain practiced Brazilian jiu-jitsu every day.
- Bourdain worked with his best friend Eric Ripert as much or as little as he wanted. Italian actress Asia Argento and he professed love for each other.
- Bourdain had a loving relationship with his daughter Ariane, born in 2007.

Even with his millions of dollars, the best job, fame, awards, world-class Education, daily exercise and people that loved him; Anthony Bourdain could not "use socially" and felt hopeless.

I have the 12 steps of Narcotics Anonymous to teach me how to change. I have meetings, literature, a sponsor and friends in recovery. NA only promises freedom

from

active addiction but I receive so much more. I have joy, gratitude, inner peace. I give and receive love and I have hope.

“There seems to be this alternative: either go on as best we can to the bitter ends—jails, institutions or death—or find a new way to live.”



Coming back from a drug addiction is like starting in the negative. You have no money. Your credit is screwed. Nobody trusts you. You have a huge gap in your work history. You probably have no car. You might have charges. But despite all of it, we do come back. We fight our way out of hell, and we make it.

Serenity Prayer Meditation

Sit comfortably, with your eyes closed and your spine straight. Direct your attention to your breathing. Take three deep cleansing breaths...in thru your nose and out thru your mouth. With each breath feel your body releasing tension. Your shoulders drop, your jaw relaxes and your hands and feet become still. As your body becomes more relaxed, your mind quiets down and your breath goes back to its natural rhythm. When thoughts, emotions, physical feelings or external sounds occur, simply accept them, giving them the space to come and go without judging or getting involved with them. Maintaining a normal breathing pattern, we will take in the words of the Serenity Prayer:

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference.

We now begin our personal journey thru the Serenity Prayer.

God, grant me the serenity.....

Serenity – calm, peaceful, tranquil. I release the chaos of my mind and I embrace serenity. I take time to rest and be at peace with myself and the world around me. I stop long enough to appreciate all that I have accomplished. I look at my life without judgment. I bless the relationships in my life knowing that I grow and flourish with the love and challenges they bring. I am serene. I come to know and embrace gratitude. Make a list in your head of the all things you are grateful for on this beautiful evening/morning. Feel your gratitude. Now, in silence express that gratitude to the Presence.

To accept the things I cannot change.....

Acceptance – I accept my past. I accept my present. I accept my future, whatever it may hold. With the help of my Higher Power, my fear has been lifted and I am set free. I accept the miracle of recovery, one day at a time. I accept my blessings knowing I am worthy of them all. I accept life on life's terms and have what I need to meet each day as it comes.

We will now go back into the silence with this prayer...

Dear God, Please help me to accept people, places & things, as they are, not as I would have them be

Help me to know the meaning of true acceptance

Courage to change the things I can.....

I have the courage to be honest with myself knowing the only things I can change are my attitudes & behaviors. I face life with an open mind and an open heart in spite of my fear. The relationship with my Higher Power flourishes bringing me freedom and the belief in my right to happiness and peace of mind. It takes courage to release the familiar and embrace the new. I bravely open myself to new ideas as they will change my life experience. Let's take the following statement by Maya Angelou into the silence:

“One isn't necessarily born with courage, but one is born with potential. Without courage, we cannot practice any other virtue with consistency.” With courage, we can be kind, true, merciful, generous, and honest.

And wisdom to know the difference.

I am gaining wisdom daily. I am learning to separate truth from lies, reality from illusion, and fact from fantasy. I seek to know the difference between emotional truth & spiritual truth, emotional impulse and intuitive guidance. I am learning to love myself & trust my choices. I AM the difference.

Now, one more time into the silence, to see what messages of wisdom come to you.

Camille G.



HOROSCOPES

Aries - The ram is great at initiating projects and leading others.

Taurus-This earth sign is dependable! You can count on them to stay till the job is done.

Gemini- The twin drives very fast. They try to accomplish a week of activities in a day.

Cancer-The Mothers of the zodiac. They are very nurturing and warm.

Leo- They love compliments. There is no compliment that is too small for a Leo.

Virgo- Allow a Virgo to organize your world. They are detail oriented.

Libra- They have difficulty making a selection from several choices. They seek balance.

Scorpio- They will never forget a kindness or a betrayal.

Sagittarius- They often work a variety of different jobs in a lifetime.

Capricorn- They are the Fathers of the zodiac. They will give you wise guidance.

Aquarius- They collect strange characters and often refer to them as friends.

Pisces- This water sign is prone to day dreaming and pretending to listen.

BAY AREA HISTORY



1983 (16 Meetings):

**Early 1983 Bradenton and Sarasota joined the Bay Area Group.

**Later in 1983, The Tampa Group officially started supporting the Bay Area.

Additional Meetings:

- High Hopes in Sarasota (Bradenton already established)
- Give it Up Group in St. Petersburg (Late 1983)
- Easy Does It in Clearwater
- NASA in Tampa in Ybor City (late 1983)
- Quest for Serenity was renamed from St. Paul's in Tampa
- Sunshine Group in Springhill
- Sunshine Group in Indian Rocks Beach, Suncoast Hospital

**Bushnell, Springhill and Brooksville became part of the Bay Area in 1983.

** Bradenton and Sarasota broke away from the Bay Area Group to form their own area in late 1983. The Bay Area continued to support this new area financially and helped set up their help line which was manned by the Bay Area for a brief period of time.

**A new H&I meeting was formed in the Largo Work Release Center

**Area Service was moved from Horizon Hospital to Clearwater where it convened on the 4th Monday of each month.