

# Just for Today On the Bay

Bay Area Newsletter

July 2008

JUST  
FOR  
TODAY

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## Bob B. clean date 8/12/61



My last day of narcotics use or drugs of any type, I had just fixed and two policemen got me spread-eagled on a chainlink fence that I was trying to get over. I became sober and clean immediately. Everything became very clear and didn't want to die that way. Something clicked on in my mind and I thought, "It doesn't have to be this way".

After that last rest and recuperation, I found out that I could work these steps. The sum total of my life has changed as a direct result. I got involved in working the steps, trying to understand what they were talking about, to really understand what they were talking about. I found there is a certain amount of action that goes with every step. I had to get into action about how the steps applied to me. I always thought the steps applied to you, not me.

It got down to talking about God and spirituality. I had canned God a long time ago, then I put that in church, and I didn't have anything to do with church. I found out that God and spirituality have nothing to do with church.

I had to learn to get involved. It has been one hell of an adventure. My life has changed to such an extent that it is almost unbelievable that I was ever there. However, I know from where I came. I have constant reminders. I need that constant reminder of newcomers and talking with others.

This program has become a part of me. It has become a part of life and living for me. I understand more clearly the things that are happening in my life today. I no longer fight the process.

I came to meetings of Narcotics Anonymous in order to take care of the responsibilities that have been given to me. Today, I care. I am addicted to the loving and caring and sharing that goes on in N.A. I look forward to more of these things in my life.

My problem is addiction, it has something to do with drugs being the means of not coping with life, it has something to do with that within, that compulsion and that obsession. I now have the tools to do something about it. The Twelve Steps of recovery are the tools.

**Basic Text, p 162**

*The opinions expressed herein are those of the individual contributors, and not the opinions of the Bay Area Literature Subcommittee, or Narcotics Anonymous as whole.*

## F.R.C.N.A. 27

F.R.C.N.A 27, "The Wonder of Recovery" was held July 3-6 2008 in Tampa, Florida. Recovering addicts from all over swarmed to the Marriott Hotel in Tampa to be a part of this event. I think I even heard someone say that he was from Brazil! We won't know the exact totals of attendees & locations until November after all the figures have been calculated. If I had to guess, I would say close to 3000 in attendance throughout the weekend, but then again I'm not very good at the guessing games of "how many candies in the jar?".

If you were one of those in attendance it may have been testing your patience to wait for an elevator, or to find a seat. But, the beauty of the scene would be to look at how many addicts were in one place who were NOT using. Besides, maybe the gift was having the opportunity presented to you to get to know someone new.

There were a variety of speakers and their stories touched someone, somewhere. I witnessed a lot of nodding heads, tears and laughter throughout workshops, highlighted speakers, and the comedy show. The pool seemed to stay full, and exploded with the scheduled pool party. There were even people on their balconies dancing and I am not sure that they were with our convention. That just goes to show you that we speak even when our mouths aren't open. The dances evoked some 80's style break dancing which promoted some physical exhaustion from all the Starbucks consumed. I even saw a guy with 7 days clean play the piano in the lobby while people up & downstairs sang along & swayed in unison. How AWESOME!

We DO Recover & We DO have fun in Recovery!

Anonymous ;-)



### September Issue Topic

Service to NA is a selfless act as we are not paid employees. We are mere trusted servants to a fellowship that paid us upfront with freedom from active addiction. We become passionate about sharing this gift with others, and we tend to migrate toward service commitments that somehow touched our lives. This is where we give back.

The question is: when does passion become poison? When do we move from our positions and allow the passion to flow freely from a newer member? When is it time to step aside and allow the group or position to grow without our direction?

*We can never fully recover, no matter how long we stay clean. Complacency is the enemy of members with substantial clean time. If we remain complacent for long, the recovery process ceases. The disease will manifest apparent symptoms in us. Denial returns, along with obsession and compulsion. Guilt, remorse, fear, and pride may become unbearable. Soon we reach a place where our backs are against the wall. Denial and the First Step conflict in our minds. If we let the obsession of using overcome us, we are doomed. Only a complete and total acceptance of the First Step can save us. We must totally surrender ourselves to the program.*

**Basic Text, Recovery and Relapse p. 80 - 81**

## "Write It Out" by Richard H.

My sponsor wants me to write it out. Whatever it is. If something's bugging me, if I'm happy about something, if I'm working on an internal conflict in my recovery, the answer always comes back from him, write it out.

Sometimes I think he must view life as one big grocery store and if I don't write a shopping list of healthy food I'll somehow come home with nothing but nineteen boxes of Count Chocula by mistake.

And maybe he's right; my disease has made me do some pretty strange things in the past. I've written about many of them.

The most useful tool in mankind's history has been the written word. Not even the invention of the wheel surpassed it; for that matter, the wheel probably came with "Some Assembly Required" instructions.

The *form* of the words is important for my recovery writings; I should write by hand on paper. Typing on the computer, as I'm doing now, is unacceptable. After all, the version of MS Word I'm using is already obsolete, and one flicker of a power surge or a piece of dust getting into the hard drive can wipe out what I've written so far, as if it never existed. As if *I* never existed to write it. More importantly, computers are cold pieces of machinery. The words are more *real* when my hand makes them.

The words I choose to write and the style I write them in are much less important than the act of writing itself. After all, my sponsor never said, "Write down what you like about yourself – and make it good, because I'm submitting it to *The New Yorker*," or "*The Atlantic*

*Monthly* wants 500 words on your resentments and if they don't publish it, you're a failure, doomed to relapse."

That doesn't keep me from procrastinating or staring at a blank page for hours or days. After all, my disease *doesn't* want me to write about it or do anything else to weaken it or keep it managed.

So, sometimes, when I'm at a loss for words, I use someone else's. Heartfelt, accurate plagiarism is an occasional crutch I use against writer's block.

I'd written probably 15 letters to my late father about our troubled relationship that never quite hit the mark or made me feel more than a little bit better. Then, one day on the bus when I was having yet another rage-filled conversation with him in my head, it occurred to me that the lyrics to one of my favorite songs summed up everything I meant. So, I wrote them down in my notebook, adopting them as my own statement.

Now, whenever a situation or person reminds me of the worst parts of our relationship, the phrases I memorized after hearing them frequently on the radio for years (and finally wrote down) immediately spring to mind, and they take away they urge to develop more wrinkles in my forehead from scowling or to sprout more grey hair. Or the urge to throw away everything I've worked so hard for and escape those horrible feelings by using.

A pen is like a funnel for emotions that would be inappropriate for me to scream at people. Those feelings are going to get out *somehow*, and I just don't need any more chaos in

my life. The wrong words spoken out loud to the wrong person can change my life forever, especially if the first word is, "Officer..."

So why is it so difficult for me to write step work and recovery-oriented therapeutic writings, when I know it's good for me? I've never had any trouble writing columns, articles, business plans and memos, or scripts; why is my recovery journal only half full?

Fear. Not fear of someone reading my darkest thoughts, necessarily, since I've probably done no worse than anyone else.

Writing step work is like writing out a long division problem. It's easy once it hits paper. But, my disease is a problem that doesn't want to be solved. It can always think of some excuse to try and keep and growing living in my head, versus being sorted out on paper. It's always sounds easier to watch TV, or fix something to eat, or pick up an extra shift at work. Anything and everything has popped into my brain to avoid writing step work – I've cleaned the bathtub twice in one day.

But, every time I get past those thoughts and impulses and sit down to quietly commit my anguish to paper, the solutions end up there for me in black and white. It's hard for my ego to argue when my eyes see the words.

So, after I finish this article, I'm going to get my pen and notebook and sort out a problem that's been on my mind. Right after I go to the store; I'm running low on Count Chocula.

Jimmy K. " Talk to the guy that's shaking so goddamn bad or the gal that's shaking so bad that they can't sit here, even on their hands. You know? That's where I learned what this program is all about..."

## Welcome Newcomer by Doug B.

Don't be nervous, Don't be shy. We've lived our lives through a bunch of lies. This fellowship is better than trying to find a place to hide. It won't be too long, till it begins to show. Freedom from active addiction, Allows Us to grow. So sit back and enjoy the ride. We've all been in your seat before, Somewhere in our past days. Handcuffs and grey bars, was not for me to decide. Yet they did open My eyes. So I came back, and raised My hand. Put another white chip on my side. Unwilling to notice the fact, All my life I've loved to get high. Remembering days as a newcomer. I would slip outside. Only to find You all outside. So I bum a smoke, And clear the tear from my eye. Then I ask for a ride now I find , I can no longer hide. So I get back home, and get a hug goodbye. With hopes of not getting High..

## Now by Tracy P.

These hours, days, months and years...  
I know I'm ok now because I am here.  
The days go by without any thought...  
Damn it! I shouldn't have bought!!!  
See, that was my life before I was here.  
Sitting alone and afraid, in front of that mirror.  
For years I played that game, you see,  
I knew no better...  
The Chase ,The Dream.  
It's all gone now...  
My thoughts more clear.  
To see myself without that fear.  
To live each day, doing what's right.  
The dream I chase now ...Is My Life.

## The Betrayal of My Addiction by George L.

When I was quite young and the grown-ups were mean,

And my little soul hadn't yet learned how to dream...

It was then in your hands I entrusted my life,

A strength I found willing to take on my strife.

Where will you take me when angels betray?

When reddish orange hell fires burn all in their way?

You answered me simply as you pulled me along:

"I really don't know but we need to move on."

At first I felt safe with your carnival blasts,

Ferris wheels, Tilt-A-Whirls,

pain...in the past.

Regardless how rough, I could float in the sea,

Unsinkable strength I had found inside me.

My friend deep within I thought free of all sin,

Was just a life jacket with an anchor within.

My shadow betrayed me, much to my surprise,

When finally desperate, I opened my eyes.

On the sands of the sea you lie rusting, betrayed.

"You still need me and want me..." your words seem to say.

And maybe you're right...but you could just be wrong,

I really don't know; I just need to move on.

The grown-ups, the anchor and death I forsake,

Betrayal and lust I have left in my wake.

On the horizon of this safe, desolate shore,

I walk slowly, gratefully, hurting no more.

No longer in cages, green parrots are free—

Screeching...squawking...talking to me.

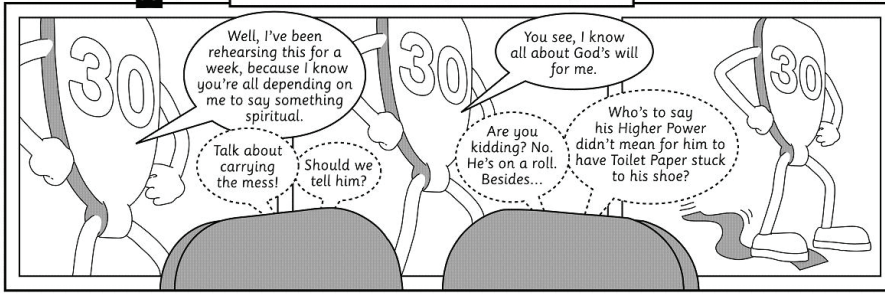
"What's next?" they ask eagerly, flying along,

I really don't know—I just need to move on.



# C'hops "God likes a good laugh"

volume 1 - no. 3



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Q: "How many addicts does it take to change a light bulb?"

A: "Change?! What the heck is change?"

## STEP TWO

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

- |           |           |             |
|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| ACCEPT    | HELP      | PROGRAM     |
| ACTION    | HIGHER    | PROGRESSIVE |
| AGREE     | IDEA      | PURPOSE     |
| BEGIN     | INCURABLE | RECOVERY    |
| BELIEVE   | INSANE    | RELIEVE     |
| CARING    | JUNKIE    | RESTORE     |
| COMMON    | LACKED    | ROAD        |
| DECIDE    | LIVING    | SANITY      |
| DESPAIR   | LOVING    | SAW         |
| EFFORTS   | MIRACLES  | SOURCE      |
| EVIDENCE  | MISTAKES  | STEP        |
| EXISTENCE | NECESSARY | STOP        |
| FAITH     | NEED      | TALKED      |
| FATAL     | OBSESSION | TRUST       |
| FEAR      | ONLY      | TWO         |
| GOD       | OPEN      | ULTIMATELY  |
| GREATER   | PAIN      | VACUUM      |
| GROUP     | POWER     | VOID        |
| GROW      | PROCESS   | WORKING     |

By ED

All of the words are taken from Step 2 in the Basic Text pages 22-24

## Florida Region Help Lines

**The Bahamas** : 242-325-6200, 242-462-5245 (Nassau)

**Bay Area**: 727-547-0444 (Pinellas County; Clearwater, St Petersburg, Largo, Palm Harbor, Tarpon Springs)

**Big Bend Area**: 850-599-2876 (Tallahassee, and surrounding area)

**Chain of Lakes**: 352-319-5617 (Leesburg, Eustis, Tavares, and surrounding areas)

**Daytona**: 800-477-0731 / 904-8312-1660 (Daytona, Deland, Port Orange, Deltona, Flagler beach)

**First Coast**: 800-576-4357 / 904-723-5683 (Jacksonville, St Augustine, Orange Park, Fernandina, and surrounding areas)

**Forest Area**: 352-368-6061 (Ocala, Dunnellon, Bellview, McIntosh)

**Heartland Area**: 863-683-0530 (Polk, Hardee, & Highland Counties; Lakeland, Winter Haven, Plant City, Bartow, Sebring Lake Wales, Haines City, Lk. Alfred, Lk. Placid)

**Orlando Area**: 407-425-5157 (Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Lake Counties, Altamonte Springs, Winter Park, Disney World, and surrounding areas)

**Palm Coast**: 561-848-6262 (West Palm Beach, Jupiter, Wellington, Royal Palm Bch, Palm Bch Gardens, Lake Worth, Lantana, Belle Glade)

**Recovery Coast**: 727-842-2433 (Pasco County: New Port Richey, Hudson, Holiday, Zephyrhills and Dade City)

**River Coast Area**: 352-754-7200 (Hernando) / 352-382-0851 (Citrus) (Spring Hill, Crystal River, Masarkytown, Brooksville, Floral City, Inverness)

**Space Coast Area**: 321-631-4357 (Brevard County: Cocoa, Cocoa Beach, Indialantic, Melbourne, Merrit Island, Rockledge, Titusville, Valkaria, Scottsmoor, Mims, Viera, Satelite Beach, Palm Bay, Melbourne Beach, Indian Harbor)

**Suncoast**: 941-957-7910 (Bradenton, Sarasota, Venice)

**Tampa Funcoast Area**: 813-879-4357 (Tampa, Brandon and Temple Terrace, Lutz)

**Treasure Coast**: 561-564-0664 (Vero/Ft. Pierce) / 561-343-8373 (Ft. Pierce, Vero Beach, Okeechobee County, Port St. Lucie)

**UnCoast Area** : 352-376-8008 (Gainesville, and surrounding area)

## Bay Area Service Committee Meetings

Area Service Committee (ASC):	9:45 AM 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday @ Terra Nova*
Hospitals & Institutions:	9:00AM 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday @ Terra Nova*
Public Relations:	10:00 AM 2 <sup>nd</sup> Saturday @ Terra Nova*
Helpline:	11:00 AM 2 <sup>nd</sup> Saturday @ Terra Nova*
Policy:	8:30 AM 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday @ Terra Nova*
Admin.:	9:00 AM 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday @ Terra Nova*
Activities:	6:30 PM Every other Thursday @ Terra Nova*
Lit./Newsletter:	TBD
Web page:	TBD

\*Terra Nova is located @ 2800 41<sup>st</sup> Ave N. St Pete



# Meetings That Need Support

## **New Meeting - Nature of Recovery Tuesday 8PM**

440 10th Ave South (Freedom House\*)

## **Midnight Message - Friday & Saturday**

Terra Nova

2800 41st Ave North, St Pete

## **Women Do Recover Wednesday 7PM**

(No Addict Turned Away)

St Paul's\*, 1199 Highland Ave (Upstairs) Largo

## **Keys To Recovery 7 days/week 8PM**

(Needs Committed Home Group Members)

Terra Nova, 2800 41st Ave North, St Pete

## **Spiritual Solutions Mon. & Tues. 8PM**

St Pete Vineyard Church\*

2525 30th Ave North, St Pete

## **New Attitudes Friday 8PM**

St Paul's Methodist\*

1199 Highland Ave, Largo

## **Recovery on Keystone—Needs Support**

**We meet Tuesday & Thursday nights at 6:45PM**

1700 Keystone Road @ All Saints Church in Tarpon Springs\*

**Child Care is provided at both meetings by donation**

**\*NA is not affiliated with any of the above facilities**

*"Being able to have a guide is the greatest gift of recovery for me. Before I had a sponsor, I was just floating along with no real direction. I hurt all the time, and I didn't understand why. My sponsor helped me to see the reason why and offered a path to change so I didn't have to hurt as long or as much."*

**Sponsorship, p. 7**

## **Newsletter Guidelines**

We would like to thank all of you who contributed to the newsletter. It was by your efforts that this publication was made possible. We look forward to your contributions in upcoming publications, and we accept articles, poetry, jokes, and cartoons.

Please e-mail all contributions to: [lit@basna.org](mailto:lit@basna.org)

### **Literature Sub-committee Note:**

The opinions expressed herein are those of the individual contributors, and not the opinions of the Bay Area Literature Sub-committee, or Narcotics Anonymous as a whole. The Handbook for Narcotics Anonymous states that: "The 12 Traditions of NA should serve as the basic guidelines for editing your newsletter ... the language of NA recovery should be used." All editorial decisions made by the Literature Sub-committee have been made with these guidelines in mind. We welcome any feedback in accordance with the Second Tradition. Please indicate if you would like that feedback published.

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

