

# Just for Today On the Bay

Bay Area Newsletter

March 2009

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## You Can't Get There from Here... by JW H., Clean Date 03-05-79

Hello Family! I am Happy to be Here—Happy to be Anywhere! As I consider my 30<sup>th</sup> year in this amazing fellowship, I find myself feeling completely inadequate to the task of expressing the Gratitude I feel to NA, to my home group (We Do Recover), my sponsor, and each and every addict that sits in the rooms. How did it happen that I was given this blessed life instead of the life of an Addict, and all that that means?

...As the caseworker drove away with me, I remember looking out the back window of the car. Mrs. Williams was standing there attempting to restrain my little sister Stacy, then three years old, who was sobbing, yelling my name, and reaching her arms out toward me. I was thinking, who will take care of her? Our Mom was gone. Our Daddy was dead. Although I was only five, I was trying to be a "big" boy. My mother had always told me to protect my sister. I felt so helpless. So angry. So alone.

I grew up in foster care, receiving homes, state group homes, and juvenile hall. I developed certain survival skills. Combined with these learned skills, I had many personality characteristics that assured I'd always be at odds with 'respectable' society. For many years I had a chip on my shoulder. This hostile attitude placed me at odds with everyone! I relied on only myself, never trusting or caring too much. I also became an Addict, consumed with finding ways and mean to get more.

In 1978, I was reunited with my mother and sister. During that reunion, I learned that my dad had died as a direct result of Addiction. Mom mentioned that addiction was rampant in our family history and I should be cautious. I remember thinking, "What does this information have to do with me?" I was about to find out.

In the next year I was charged with four counts of vehicular assault. I would get loaded, get angry, then get in my truck and run people off the road. I was consumed with seeking out violent confrontation. I was physically and emotionally abusive.

In January of 1979, I was invited to a potluck dinner. It was a "renegade" group of addicts who started the meeting so they could identify as addicts. In that first meeting, when members shared their stories, there was a lot I related to. I came to realize I had reached a state of complete demoralization. There I was, beaten and at the end of my rope. I felt defeated and hopeless. I gave up. I surrendered. Experiencing and feeling total hopelessness opened my mind and heart and allowed me to be willing to follow the suggestions of those who had recovered from similar circumstances. I threw myself into this life of recovery. I saw and felt results almost immediately, and so was encouraged to continue struggling against life-long habits and attitudes. This process continues to this day, some 30 years later (that's 10,958 days!).

I am living a life today that I could not have even conceived thirty years ago. I believed people who have family like mine do not end up living the kind of life good people deserve. My family history and my own history are rife with addiction, physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, mental illness, prostitution, crime and abandonment of children and family. This is my family legacy. To coin a phrase, "You Can't Get There From Here." No way. It's not possible. And yet, in spite of all evidence to the contrary, I am clean and alive today through the Grace of God and the fellowship of NA. Thank you and Bless you All.

## March Issue Topic Submissions

### “THE SAME PERSON WILL USE AGAIN”

Before starting Step 4 of Narcotics Anonymous, I came to realize that the first 3 steps gave me new tools to use. I had already surrendered to my addiction, I had lost the desire to use drugs. I had the knowledge and ability to move forward without overwhelming fear. I actually learned some healthy decision making skills. My new found hope let me start step 4 without all the dishonesty that plagued me in my past. At this point in my recovery, I had given my Higher Power the authority to guide me in my life. I had some trust and faith that God would help through this experience. Deep down I sensed only good would come from a searching and moral inventory. I would use this confidence to continue my journey. I had the desire for a happier more enjoyable lifestyle.

The definition of moral in the dictionary says, “Of or concerned with the judgment or instruction of goodness or badness of character and behaviors.” It also goes on to describe moral as: “Conforming to established standards of good behavior”; and, “Arising from conscience.” My past was filled with questionable habits and poor behaviors. Moral was an expression that described standards that had long left me. I had stopped caring about being a good person. I had long lost the ability to be a respectable human being. My active addiction destroyed most of my values. One of my goals in recovery was to become a better or "moral" human being. A person that had some integrity. I decided to follow through with a searching and fearless moral inventory. I remembered hearing the same person will use again. That motivated me to look deeper inside myself and become more familiar with my life.

My sponsor assured me the first 3 steps prepared me to begin step 4. My Higher Power supplied me with the strength necessary to write down my moral inventory. I had enough faith that it would be okay. I had learned from the experience of other addicts in Narcotics Anonymous that this step could change my life for the better. This step required me to be honest. I had to be self honest about my character defects to gain any chance for a positive change. Each disclosure offered me an opportunity for growth. The negative aspects of my addiction showed me how far I let myself down. The spiritual principles of NA that helped me go on included acceptance, hope, desire, faith, courage, willingness, faith, unconditional love, open-mindedness, and strength. I was writing down my personal moral inventory. It was filled with resentment, anger, arrogance, self-pity, dishonesty, egotism, jealousy, fear, lust, guilt, greed, self centeredness, failures, disgust, and false pride. Step 4 was exposing many negative aspects of my personality. I needed the spiritual principles I learned in the first three steps to help me deal with feelings I felt. The characteristics in my personal moral inventory showed me how they connected me to my addiction. I was exposing the negative aspects of my character. It was revealing the causes for my resentments and anger. I could see how blaming others and self-pity was controlling my feelings and behaviors. My sponsor made sure my searching and moral inventory included good characteristics. Many were ones I had learned early in my life, but lost during my active addiction. I was practicing some good behaviors since getting clean. I included them in my inventory. Honesty, hope, faith, willingness, and humility were among them. My Higher Power provided me the tools to work this step.

My feelings were like a roller coaster ride. I gained a new awareness. It hurt to see the truth. I needed the love and understanding to know that it would be okay. My active addiction destroyed a lot of my life. It was not easy harboring anger and resentment. I needed to find a way to feel better. As I wrote down my moral inventory, I was encouraged by others that they had found freedom from finishing their inventory. This empathy provided me with the additional strength to finish my inventory.

I was learning that my character defects were destroying me. Since coming to NA, I had a conscious contact with my Higher Power. This contact was helping me. It made my life more manageable. I desired a positive change in my life. I was enjoying my spiritual growth. My new behaviors helped me understand how important this inventory was to my recovery. It was actually a starting point to guide me to a life worth living. I was being prepared for true positive change. My Higher Power was guiding me toward a better way of life. I was learning to trust the process.

The 4th step allowed me to make progress in my recovery. The honest assessment of my life, opened the door for me to practice a new way to live. It was the self examination that was necessary for positive growth. I wanted to feel like a whole happy person again. Not a perfection person a whole happy person. In hindsight, the magnitude of step 4 showed me how imperative the 4th step was to continue in my recovery.

## May Issue Topic

Share your experience with being a parent in recovery. How do you balance your recovery and parenting? Whether you are a Mommy or a Daddy, whether you are single or married. Try to balance your life with little ones to take care of them. Then how to handle your child if they start showing signs of addiction.

Don't be nervous, don't be shy. We've lived our lives, through a bunch of lies. Just sit back, and enjoy the ride. We've all been in your seat before. As a newcomer, I raise my hand. And put a white chip on my side. I may at times slip out the back way. Only to find you all outside. So I bum a smoke, and wipe the tear from my eye. Then I ask for a ride home. And get a hug goodbye, with hopes of not getting high...

Author: Freshlines aka Doug B.

### TRADITION ONE

"Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on N.A. unity."

Our First Tradition concerns unity and our common welfare. One of the most important things about our new way of life is being a part of a group of addicts seeking recovery. Our survival is directly related to the survival of the group and the Fellowship. To maintain unity within Narcotics Anonymous, it is imperative that the group remain stable, or the entire Fellowship perishes and the individual dies.

Basic Text Fifth Edition: Tradition One, page 59

### "Twelve Steps to a Relapse"

Every relapse has a beginning, and every relapse has an ending. Know Your Danger Signals!

Make the ending of your relapse Recovery, not death! Relapse is a serious and sometimes fatal reality.

1. Start missing meetings for any reason, real or imaginary.
2. Become critical of the methods used by other members who may not agree with you in everything.
3. Nurse the idea that someday, somehow, you can use again in a controlled manner.
4. Let the others do the 12th step work in your group. You are too busy.
5. Become conscious of your NA "Seniority" and view every member with a skeptical and jaundiced eye.
6. Become so pleased with your own views of the program that you consider yourself an "Elder Statesman".
7. Start a small clique within your own group, composed of only a few members who see eye to eye with you.
8. Tell the new member in confidence that you yourself do not take one or two of the 12 Steps seriously.
9. Let your mind dwell more and more on how much you are helping others rather than on how much the program is helping you.
10. If an unfortunate member has a relapse, drop him at once.
11. Cultivate the habit of borrowing money from other members, then stay away from meetings to avoid embarrassment.
12. Look upon the "one day at a time" solution as a vital thing for new members, but not for yourself. You have outgrown the need of that a long time ago.

Most importantly, always remember we can all have another relapse, but we cannot be guaranteed another recovery.

**Question:** How do we honor our Higher Power and still honor the right of the person next to us to have their own understanding and follow NA traditions?

How we honor our Higher Power is done the same way as we would honor anyone in our NA family. You live by the spiritual principles learned in NA as well as by putting into use the 12 Steps and Traditions. I know for myself, I live, to the best of my ability, life by example to the newcomers. I work the Twelve Steps on a regular basis and try to practice the spiritual principles that I have learned, in all my affairs. By doing this, I am giving back what has been so freely given to me. I might sound like a cliché but the truth is.... If you don't give back, it's as if you are stealing from NA. To do this, would be a complete dishonor to my Higher Power as well as anyone else in NA. At the same time though, I realize that everyone has their own recovery to worry about. I can only worry about my recovery. Each person has their right to translate the Steps and Traditions how they see them. I respect the fact that not everyone will read them and interpret them the same way. That's ok. I have grown enough in NA to understand and respect that.

Steve H.  
Tampa Bay Area  
Keys 2 Recovery Home Group



### Discovery of Self

New clothes, new car, bring feelings of wealth.  
Money to spend without remorse.  
A breeze of freedom flows through the room.  
Pictures of self, new clothes affixed to old, stained skin.  
Soon these new feelings will be gone again.  
Time for another plan to feel fresh, rejuvenated.  
Only time will tell what is in store.  
Day by day, my life unfolds,  
bearing new obstacles, but also new tools.  
The pain will subside in time, I know.  
A seasoned veteran on this subject am I.  
Time and time again,  
the same methods implemented  
But no new answers arise.  
Repetition is the Devil's advocate,  
this has been proven.  
Given some time, coupled with boredom,  
the urges return.  
From fog-hidden alcoves, a new way emerges.  
Symbols of freedom turn from old to new.  
Once power, control, gluttony, pride.  
Now dawns a humble new day, blue skies abound.  
Honor and values, once lost in the shuffle  
Peers from beneath the veil of ignorance,  
denial and sloth.  
That new day begins.  
Sunrise is truthful, silent moon no where in sight.  
Time to participate in the events of today  
For readiness combats futile perplexity.  
Ignorance no longer stands as a valid excuse.  
The time has come to live in today.  
A new friend is made.  
My best friend.  
Me.

-Chris B.

One of the hardest things that I have encountered is change. I have had to change my playgrounds and playmates. For me, that was one of the easier areas of change. It was true on day one, and remains so today, essential for ongoing recovery. What has been hardest is changing attitudes, ideas, patterns, and reactions. When I encounter people today who don't agree with me, I need to try and respond to them in a spirit of love. This is quite a change from ignoring them as I did in the past.

## WORD SEARCH STEP NINE

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

Amends	Financial
Understanding	Ambivalence
Direct	Gratitude
Experience	Resolution
Self Righteousness	Restoration
Preparations	Restitution
Strengthen	Guilt
Responsibility	Shame
Spiritual	Consequences
Commitment	Creative
Families	Imagination
Fears	Emphasizing
Expectations	Harmed
Venturing	Anonymously

Created by Sara J.

# Humor Corner

**Question:** Why do crystal-users "do it" doggie style?

**Answer:** So they can both look out the window at the same time. (paranoid)

**Question:** What do you call someone who's been up for two weeks straight?

**Answer:** A two-weaker.

## Definition of an Addict:

Someone who wants  
to be held  
while isolating



With permission: Ben Ben, MD

**Question:** How can you pick out the tweaker in the grocery store?

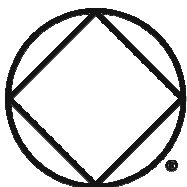
**Answer:** He is the one with his cart flipped upside down fixing the wheels!

## Florida Region Help Lines

<b><u>The Bahamas</u></b> :	242-325-6200, 242-462-5245 (Nassau)
<b><u>Bay Area</u></b> :	727-547-0444 (Pinellas County; Clearwater, St Petersburg, Largo, Palm Harbor, Tarpon Springs)
<b><u>Big Bend Area</u></b> :	850-599-2876 (Tallahassee, and surrounding area)
<b><u>Chain of Lakes</u></b> :	352-319-5617 (Leesburg, Eustis, Tavares, and surrounding areas)
<b><u>Daytona</u></b> :	800-477-0731 / 904-8312-1660 (Daytona, Deland, Port Orange, Deltona, Flagler beach)
<b><u>First Coast</u></b> :	800-576-4357 / 904-723-5683 (Jacksonville, St Augustine, Orange Park, Fernandina, and surrounding areas)
<b><u>Forest Area</u></b> :	352-368-6061 (Ocala, Dunnellon, Bellview, McIntosh)
<b><u>Heartland Area</u></b> :	863-683-0530 (Polk, Hardee, & Highland Counties; Lakeland, Winter Haven, Plant City, Bartow, Sebring Lake Wales, Haines City, Lk. Alfred, Lk. Placid)
<b><u>Orlando Area</u></b> :	407-425-5157 (Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Lake Counties, Altamonte Springs, Winter Park, Disney World, and surrounding areas)
<b><u>Palm Coast</u></b> :	561-848-6262 (West Palm Beach, Jupiter, Wellington, Royal Palm Bch, Palm Bch Gardens, Lake Worth, Latana, Belle Glade)
<b><u>Recovery Coast</u></b> :	727-842-2433 (Pasco County: New Port Richey, Hudson, Holiday, Zephyrhills and Dade City)
<b><u>River Coast Area</u></b> :	352-754-7200 (Hernando) / 352-382-0851 (Citrus) (Spring Hill, Crystal River, Masarkytown, Brooksville, Floral City, Inverness)
<b><u>Space Coast Area</u></b> :	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)
<b><u>Suncoast</u></b> :	941-957-7910 (Bradenton, Sarasota, Venice)
<b><u>Tampa Funcoast Area</u></b> :	813-879-4357 (Tampa, Brandon and Temple Terrace, Lutz)
<b><u>Treasure Coast</u></b> :	561-564-0664 (Vero/Ft. Pierce) / 561-343-8373 (Ft. Pierce, Vero Beach, Okeechobee County, Port St. Lucie)
<b><u>UnCoast Area</u></b> :	352-376-8008 (Gainesville, and surrounding area)

## Bay Area Service Committee Meetings

Area Service Committee (ASC):	9:30 AM 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday @ Terra Nova*
Hospitals & Institutions:	8:30AM 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday @ Terra Nova*
Public Relations:	10:00 AM 2 <sup>nd</sup> Saturday @ Terra Nova*
Helpline:	11:00 AM Saturday before area @ 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 Wednesday @ Terra Nova*
Lit./Newsletter:	TBD (for information contact Sara J. saraann1127@yahoo.com
Web page:	TBD



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

## Anniversaries—March & April

### 7:45 Meeting Terra Nova

Tommy R. 03/11/02 7 years

### Acceptance and Change

David R. 04/26/08 1 year

### Bay Area Youth

Angela F. 03/03/02 7 years

### Be A Part Of

Jason S. 03/02/08 1 year

### Happy and Free

David J. 19 years

### Just for Today

Mel B. 04/01/00 9 years

### Keys to Recovery

Lori K. 04/13/08 1 year

### Life's a Beach

Mark S. 03/05/89 20 years

Jeanie 03/17/90 19 years

### New Attitude

Tom B. 04/15/94 15 years

### Relax and Recover

Louis P. 03/14/91 18 years

### Save You Ass

Autumn 03/01/87 22 years

Emily M. 03/01/06 3 years

Micah L. 04/24/07 2 years

### Surrender

Bob K. 03/18/04 5 years

Mark P. 03/21/08 1 year

Denise F. 04/15/94 1 year

### We Do Recover

JW H. 03/05/79 30 years

### Welcome Home

John (Bunky) 03/02/01 8 years

Kristy A. 03/13/07 2 years

### Women Do Recover

Jenna D. 03/29/05 4 years

### Unity

Dave R. 03/14/95 14 years

Marshall R. 04/13/94 15 years

That's 224 years  
Of recovery!!!!!!!



# Congratulations!



If you are interested in having your recovery anniversary published in future publications, please e-mail [lit@basrna.org](mailto:lit@basrna.org) or have your GSR report it at the monthly ASC meeting.

**LIVE MUSIC**  
**ART AUCTION**  
**KIDS CRAFT CORNER**

**A.I.R. FAIR 2009**

Hosted by The Welcome Home Group

**March 21st 2:00pm—10:00pm**

St. John's Episcopal Church

1676 S. Belcher Road

Clearwater, FL 33764

**FELLOWSHIP**  
**FUN & FOOD**

FEATURING A SPECIAL

GUEST SPEAKER

(I.B.A.)

WE ARE IN NEED OF ARTISTS & VOLUNTEERS. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED, PLEASE CALL

Patrick @ 727-455-1051 or Brittany @ 727-580-2987

<p><b>BE A PART OF</b></p> <p><b>7TH ANNUAL PICNIC</b></p> <p>03/08/09</p> <p>Anderson Park</p>	<p><b>RELAX AND RECOVER</b></p> <p>03/21 9:30am</p> <p>3rd Annual</p> <p>Good Day Sunshine</p> <p>Northeast Park, Largo</p> <p>Meetings, Speakers, Food,</p> <p>Live Band, Raffle, Jail &amp; Bail</p>	<p><b>MIDNIGHT MESSAGE</b></p> <p><b>PAJAMA PARTY</b></p> <p>03/13/09</p> <p>Terra Nova</p> <p>2800 41st Street, St Pete</p> <p>This meeting</p> <p><b>NEEDS SUPPORT</b></p>
<p><b>NEVER ALONE</b></p> <p><b>PICNIC</b></p> <p>04/04/09</p> <p>Taylor Park</p>	<p><b>ACCEPTANCE &amp; CHANGE</b></p> <p><b>Needs Support</b></p> <p>Fridays 8pm</p> <p>207 E. Buckingham</p> <p>Oldsmar 34677</p>	<p><b>7:45am Meeting Daily</b></p> <p><b>Needs Support</b></p> <p>Terra Nova</p> <p>2800 41st Street</p> <p>St Pete</p>

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

**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.

***We Know the NA Program Works!!! Basic Text, Why Are We Here? Page 16***

