

Just for Today On the Bay

Bay Area Newsletter

May 2009

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My Journey—Like it or Not

Kristi F. Clean Date 11-21-87

I am an addict and my name is Kristi. I am grateful to be a member on NA and I am thrilled to be clean one more day. I have been a member of NA since I was 19 years old. I came to NA because every other way I had attempted to stop the pain didn't work. I didn't want to stop using drugs I just wanted the pain to stop. I remember being so tired at 19. I didn't know it was possible to be that tired at 19.

I was raised in a loving decent supportive intact family. We sat down every night for dinner at 5:30. We lived in the same house my entire childhood. I felt safe, loved wanted, valued etc. Even with all of the love and support in my home I felt "less than" "apart from" I always felt a beat behind everyone else.

I picked up a drug the first time at 11. I got really sick and vowed I would never do that again. I must have forgotten that vow because I picked up again at 13 and I didn't get sick that time. I felt like I had found the solution to my problem. I was in awe of the ritual of using drugs. I hung out with people who were older than me and they thought it was funny to get the kid high. Two weeks after my 14th birthday I stuck a needle in my arm for the first time. From that point on I used everyday. Everyday! I knew that I was in trouble from the beginning because I loved it.

Circumstances occurred that brought me to my knees and my parents put me in a rehab center in Lakehurst, NJ during the Thanksgiving holiday of 1987. The first meeting I ever attended was a Narcotics Anonymous H&I (Hospitals and Institutions) meeting. These dedicated addicts got up from their holiday tables and drove in the snow to the rehab to hold a meeting.

I don't remember much of what happened in that first meeting. My head was still spinning from the occurrences of the previous couple of days. The next meeting I went to was the "Never Alone" group in Lakehurst, NJ. They were reading out of the Basic Text and I wanted one. I asked the people at the meeting where I could get a book and I was told that they had them back at the rehab we went back and asked for the Basic Texts, they were in a mop closet in a box up on a shelf covered with dust. I went to a facility that had an Alcoholics Anonymous focus, as most centers did back then. We signed the books out and I began to read the text. My life changed irrevocably in that moment. I had spent my whole life feeling that there was something inherently wrong with me and that I was destined to die a junkie in the street. What I read in that book gave me hope for the first time in my life that a better way of life was possible. I fell asleep holding that book to my chest and when I left the rehab I stole it. I have made amends for that a hundred times over.

The past 21 years I have done my best, just for today, to live this program. Through sponsorship, service, step work, I live a life today that is more incredible than I anything I could have hoped for or dreamed of. I had no idea what would happen for me when I arrived in the rooms of NA broken, and scared at 19. I have literally grown up here. Thank you for my recovery I am grateful to be a member of NA.

Thanks for listening. Peace, Kristi

May Issue Topic Submissions

Parenting in Recovery....by Brook L., Clean Date 05-05-97

Parenting in recovery has been one of the miracles that recovery has given me. When I got clean I had lost my parental rights temporarily, as a direct result of using. With my arrogance of thinking I was entitled to being a parent after putting my child in harm's way, I realized that being a parent is a privilege that is earned, not something that is assumed to be a given. Parenting in recovery has had its challenges as well as its gifts. Just being able to bring my kid up in the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous has given him more advantages than I ever had. Because of my sticking around and getting with some people who had experience in raising their kids I found some tools that helped me become the best parent I could possibly be. I listened to suggestions and saw what worked and what didn't.

In the beginning I could not see how fitting in meetings and kids could possibly work but I figured that I needed some sort of schedule and so did he. Meetings come first because without them I have no business trying to be a parent. Bringing your kid to a meeting is essential, first for you and second for them. It allows them to share in the recovery process and gives them and you practice in how to behave when in a meeting. Old timers at first would take him and occupy him so I could listen to the meeting and after a few years we learned how to sit in meeting together. I always made sure he had plenty of toys that would hold his attention for that hour and taught him how to use his inside voice.

It's funny because over the years he has, one, had his own struggles and learned how to set boundaries with family as well as friends. He's learned to accept people for who they are from watching me sponsor women. He has used those tools to become a good friend, child and grandson. He knows to act with grace and integrity and when to pick his battles. These are the gifts of recovery.

There are certain things that as a parent you have to do, especially being a single parent. PTA meetings which for me are mandatory (second Monday night of every month) for an hour, are like being in a meeting. Mandatory volunteer hours in the school (16 hrs) and trying to fit meetings, taking to school and picking up, (we don't have busing in Fundamental school), working, service, and sponsees and fellowship at times has been challenging, so I go back to the basics. I get my appointment book out and put down my driving schedule then my meetings for the week, then any service commitments that I may have for the month (between area, region, and FRCNA) and then PTA and any volunteer hours. One night every other week for sponsees and calling my sponsor every other day (even if I don't talk to my her I leave a message to stay connected). Then there is the hour or two of homework that must be done and finally bed time, and it starts all over again the next day. NA has taught me responsibility and commitment and how to have it all; the program, the life I always thought I should have, and balance.

By the grace of God my son is not interested in the disease of addiction because he's grown up in the rooms and has had an honest look at where poor choices can lead you. I'm not naive to think he won't experiment at some point but I feel I've already wrecked his first high with the knowledge he has obtained by being the child of a recovering addict. Yes he has friends that he's known whose parent(s) have been in the rooms from the beginning and it's a luck of the draw. Two of his friends have not chosen the path of addiction but 3 of them have. It bothers him that they have but he has learned to love them from afar and when they're ready to live by spiritual principle he'll be there for them, but for now he's told them that it's not what he's into and he tells them, that after everything they've seen their parents' go through to get clean and stay clean, why would they chose that path? He has learned to talk to me about everything openly and honestly, from sex to drugs to whatever. These are the gifts that Narcotics Anonymous has given me and 12 years ago I would have said I was not a good parent but now I can say I am with the help of the fellowship. As long as I do the basics, self-god-society-service, I have nothing to fear and neither do you. Thank you for my recovery.

We cannot change the nature of the addict or addiction.
We can help to change the old lie "Once an addict, always an addict", by striving to make recovery more available.
God, help us to remember this difference.

Basic Text Fifth Edition: Preface

July Issue Topic

Many people in the Narcotics Anonymous fellowship have struggled with the "Power Greater than ourselves" part of our recovery. Without having spirituality, it is almost impossible to work the Steps...step 3 to be exact. The 12 steps are a path to a spiritual awakening. We sometimes don't realize that spirituality is a fundamental part of working our steps and also the only way to sustain from active addiction. If we can open our hearts wide enough to sense our Higher Power's guidance, we will feel a calm serenity and the miracle can and will happen.

What did you learn when you were new to the program and didn't understand who or what could be a "Power greater than yourself"? Or, what has a sponsor taught you about spirituality & the fellowship? Do you think that Gods will for us become's our own true will for ourselves?

Being a parent in Recovery.....Well it's the best thing I've ever done! I always tried and I thought I was being a parent when I was in active addiction. I didn't realize until I put the drugs down that I never actually was. So today, I can be a parent. I make mistakes, but I totally feel that the best parent I can be is by example. I know that I cannot control my daughter and for that truth I am so grateful. I only learned that because no one could control me. So instead of trying to control her when she acts out, usually for her it is trouble at school for her behavior or being mouthy, I have to give her consequences and honestly sometimes it's hard to stick to them because my guilt might try to come in the way. But, with the help of other parents in recovery I do stand behind my decisions. I still might go to thoughts of guilt because my daughter was there through all of my active addiction. But then I must focus on what I am doing today to make a life for myself and my daughter. Once I focus on the truth that her life is not like it used to be....then when she says a rude comment or tries to do something that I would let her get away with in the past, it's much easier for me to stand on what is actually going on in our life for that moment. Things between us continue to get better. However, the truth is, I make mistakes with my life and my daughter's too, but as long as I continue to grow so will she. I take my daughter to meetings because I have never left her out before. I love what NA is teaching me! It is funny because she'll say, "Don't work the steps on me", because I do apply the steps in areas of my life. She didn't come home for 2 days. I was worried, but I didn't do it alone. I was at a meeting sharing that I know I have a Higher Power and I only hope my daughter does too....and she showed up at the meeting. My daughter never helped in keeping me clean even though I wanted to so get clean so many times for her. I have learned I can be in recovery and still be a mom. But for me I have to continue to do the things that keep me clean and sane first. It is my experience, that when I do that, I am able to be a better mom. I am not able to control what she does but I am able to love her unconditionally and show her that she has consequences for her actions. If I honestly look at my daughter's behavior sometimes, I remember me being the same way so what would have worked for me?? Consequences?? Maybe?? Who knows...? I do know my mom tried to control me and it made me always want to do it more. Don't hang out with so and so or don't like that guy...and of course the next day I hung out with so and so and the next day that guy was my boyfriend. I love being a single parent today and NA gives me so much hope that I know that no matter what mistakes I make, as long as I learn from them, I will be okay. I mean, who has ever gotten a handbook when you have a child that says: this is how you raise a child and they will turn out this way. We do our best raising our children TOGETHER!

Danita K

I had nowhere to turn, I felt that no one could help me, as my situation was so much different from others. I thought that I was doomed to continue in an insane drive toward self-destruction that had already sapped me of any determination to fight. I thought that I was unique until I found the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. Since that day, my life has a new meaning and a new direction.

Raising My Child in The Spirit of NA

My son is 11 and was born when I was well on my path to recovery. He did not experience the demons of my active addiction. For that, I am extremely grateful.

When I was pregnant with him, I turned to other recovering addicts for advice on how to be a parent. I had no clue. I didn't know the first thing about being a mom. That fear and inexperience reminded me of when I first came into the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous. I had no idea how to be a recovering addict. But over time, I learned - only because I listened.

The experience, strength and hope that I received started a journey that has served my son and I very well. In the early years, I was told that if I needed a meeting and had to bring him, do so. There would be some friends that would help watch him during the meeting. I was directed to meetings that offered babysitting and I learned about trading babysitting hours with other parents. I was also reminded that it's ok to ask for help. I had to realize that I could not do it all alone. I reminded myself that I did not get clean alone, and I certainly would not be able to stay clean and raise a child without help.

I soon became a single mom and the struggle for balance started with a vengeance. How do I balance being a recovering addict, a mom, an employee, a co-parent, etc? Many days, I sat in the house with my son wondering how I was going to handle it all. Then I remembered that I was not alone. There are plenty of other addicts that have successfully done this. I can do it!

My most recent struggle has been - how do I balance 5th grade homework and Little League Baseball games with meetings and service work. I have an obligation to NA, and as a result of staying clean and being a productive mom, I have an obligation to my son. He's forming his spirit, his character, his personality and it's my job to guide him. There are not enough hours in the day to do everything that I need to do and want to do. My solution is simple. My service commitment is being present and available to do those things with my son. I am present in the evenings to sit and do homework; I am present at his baseball games. I've had to rearrange my meeting schedule, but once again, with the help of others in NA, I've been able to balance my parenting world with my recovery world.

My prayer for the younger and newer women that I see in the meetings, bouncing babies on their laps, is that they stay clean long enough so we can help, just like others helped me and my son.

Those of you who know my son would agree that he is a true blessing. Parenting itself is a challenge as well as being a recovering addict. Put those two together and we are truly challenged. With the help of those that have parented before me, we are succeeding!

Jeannie

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 Fifth Edition: I Found the Only N.A. Meeting in the World, Bob B. page 162

WORD SEARCH STEP TWELVE



- Spiritual
- Awakening
- Principles
- Individual
- Awareness
- Transformation
- Encompasses
- Humility
- Universal
- Desire
- Courage
- Growth
- Consciously
- Freedom
- Compassion
- Unconditional
- God
- Gratitude
- Horizons
- Journey

Created by: Sara J.

THE TOP 12 LIST FOR NOT GOING TO MEETINGS

12. I AM TOO TIRED
11. MY DOG IS SICK
10. MY FAVORITE PROGRAM IS ON TV
11. NEED TO DO HOUSE CHORES
9. SAME PEOPLE ALWAYS SHARE AT THAT GROUP
8. TOO FAR TO DRIVE
7. I CAN MAKE MONEY WORKING OVERTIME
6. I FINALLY GOT A DATE
5. MY FAVORITE BAND IS PLAYING TONIGHT
4. I JOINED A SOFTBALL LEAGUE
3. I DO NOT GET URGES ANYMORE
2. THEY ARE JUST A BUNCH OF WHINERS
1. I SPONSOR MYSELF NOW

Humor Corner

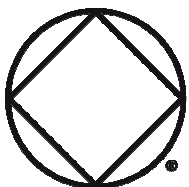


With permission: Ben Ben, MD

Florida Region Help Lines

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

Bay Area Service Committee Meetings

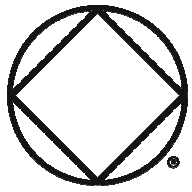


Area Service Committee (ASC):	9:30 AM 2 nd Sunday @ Terra Nova*
Hospitals & Institutions:	8:30AM 1 st Sunday @ Terra Nova*
Public Relations:	10:00 AM 2 nd Saturday @ Terra Nova*
Helpline:	11:00 AM Saturday before area @ Terra Nova*
Policy:	8:30 AM 2 nd Sunday @ Terra Nova*
Admin.:	9:00 AM 2 nd Sunday @ Terra Nova*
Activities:	6:30 PM Every Wednesday @ Terra Nova*
Lit./Newsletter:	TBD (for information contact lit@basrna.org)
Web page:	TBD



*Terra Nova is located @ 2800 41st Ave N. St Pete

Anniversaries—May & June



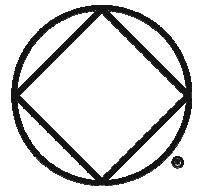
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Group Name:	Name:	Clean Date:	How Many Years Clean:
DOA	Lisa E.	05/01/02	7
DOA	Tom	05/13/88	21
DOA	Dave	05/13/01	8
Happy & Free	Jackie C.	05/02/00	9
Life's a Beach	Danita K.	05/19/08	1
Life's a Beach	Harry K.	06/23/08	1
Life's a Beach	Earlene T.	06/25/08	1
Life's a Beach	Karl P.	06/26/94	15
Midnight Message	Bruce G.	05/21/08	1
Never Alone	Scott W.	05/18/08	1
Never Alone	Megan B.	06/10/08	1
New Perspective	Paul W.	06/09/05	4
Relax & Recover	Patrick M.	05/12/08	1
Relax & Recover	Lois P.		18
Recovery on Keystone	Kim Mc.	06/16/08	1
Save Your Ass	Brian D.	05/09/08	1
Save Your Ass	Ralph W.	05/10/07	2
Save Your Ass	Melinda S.	05/22/08	1
Save Your Ass	Tony S.	06/06/02	7
Save Your Ass	Becky M.	06/12/08	1
Save Your Ass	Gregg B.	06/16/00	9
Sunshine	Arlene F.	05/06/05	4
Surrender	Jennifer S.	06/08/99	10
Surrender	Ray H.	06/20/03	6
Surrender	Joe E.	06/23/92	17
Unity	Sally M.	05/21/08	1
We Do Recover	Lisa R.		8

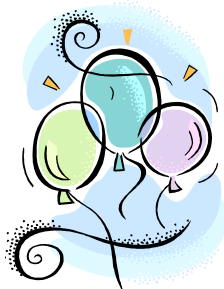


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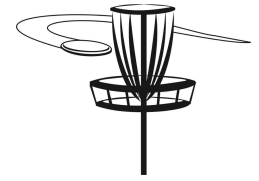
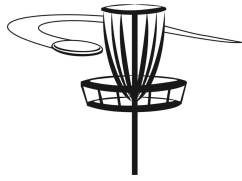
Congratulations!



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

DISC GOLF TOURNAMENT

No Experience Necessary



May 30, 2009

Taylor Park

1100 8th Ave SW, Largo, FL

Meet at Shelter #2 at noon, start time 12:30

Please contact Andrea (727) 557-7051
for more information.

Directions: West from US 19
on East Bay Dr. Then south
on Clearwater/Largo Rd.
Take a right on 8th Ave., 0.25
mile to the park. Course is at
the rear of park.

Disc Golf: (also known as
Frisbee golf) is a game based
on the rules of golf. It uses
flying discs which are similar
to the Frisbee, but usually
smaller and more dense.

MEETING NEEDS SUPPORT:

MIDNIGHT MESSAGE

Friday & Saturday

2800 41ST Ave N

St Pete

Terra Nova

MEETING NEEDS SUPPORT:

BE A PART OF

Saturday 7pm

Emmanuel Comm. Church

1150 CR1 & Curlew

Palm Harbor

Candle Light Meeting

NEW MEETING

NEEDS SUPPORT:

Wednesday 8pm

Alano Club

4615 Gulf Blvd. #112

St Pete

Beginners-New-Comers

Meeting

The Tenth Step can help us correct our living problems and prevent their recurrence. We examine our actions during the day. Some of us write about our feelings, explaining how we felt and what part we might have played in any problems which occurred. Did we cause someone harm? Do we need to admit that we were wrong? If we find difficulties, we make an effort to take care of them. When these things are left undone, they have a way of festering.

Basic Text Fifth Edition: Step Ten, page 41

***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 keep them less than 200 words. Please e-mail all contributions to: 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.

*NA will do for you what a phone booth has done for Clark Kent,
all u gotta do is be willing to get in it and change.*

