

Just for Today On the Bay

Bay Area Newsletter

July 2009

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Messenger

Jim S Clean Date: 12/25/81

It is amazing how we learn things in recovery. When I was 16 years clean, I was working a job in Birmingham, Alabama as an inspector for an emergency management agency. My duties were to visit people that had losses from a disaster. This particular disaster was a tornado. I would turn in reports that rewarded the monies to help them rebuild their lives. As an addict in recovery, I understood disasters. Prior to coming into Narcotics Anonymous, my whole life was a disaster. If they named tornados like they do hurricanes, they would have called me tornado Jim. I destroyed people's lives, including my own.

I had done over 10,000 inspections prior to this disaster. I was considered a qualified inspector. On this one day, I started reading my laptop to review my inspections. One of them was highlighted and marked "sensitive". That meant there were deaths involved. I knew right then that I needed a HP. As I read the inspection; I noticed that I would be interviewing a 72 year old woman who had lost her husband and grandson. It went on to say that she had also lost 4 neighbors. I needed my spirit to be conditioned. I said another prayer. One simply was not going to be enough.

I met with the woman. She had her granddaughter with her. Her granddaughter explained to me that her granddad had placed a recliner chair over her grandmother, and then jumped on top of their grandson to protect him. The tornado blew through their home. She told me the grandson and the grandfather were blown out into a tree limb that pierced and killed them. She said her grandmother was hurting and needed as much help as we could provide. I was very teary eyed and could feel their pain. I did my inspection the best that I could under the conditions.

The elderly woman never spoke during the interview; her granddaughter spoke for her. I explained to them how we could help, and I listed the things we could provide them. I was now finishing up the interview when the elderly woman spoke. She asked me if I could do something else for her. I really, really wanted to be able to help her. I said, "Sure". She said, "Young man, will you give me a hug?" My heart smiled. NA had been hugging me for 16 years. I was a professional hugger. I felt the presence of GOD that day. She did not care about the money we were awarding her. She did not want anything, but a simple hug. I will never forget that day, because I felt like a Messenger. My job was to give a hug, and Narcotics Anonymous had prepared me.

~Jim S.

Inside this issue:

Topics

Personal Stories, poetry

Comics and puzzles

Florida Region Help-lines

Area Service Info

Recovery Anniversaries

Meetings need support

Activities

Newsletter Guidelines

July Issue Topic Submissions

Struggling for a “Me”-racle?

When first coming to the rooms of NA, I truly thought that the world was run by “me” and “for me only.” Never – ever did I think that maybe, just maybe, there were more important, or smarter or greater things than myself and my drug(s) of choice.

I was so scared to have a sponsor because I was deathly afraid of having to work Step 3. I think about it now and have to laugh because it is one of the easiest and best things I ever learned in this program. I was actually so scared that I dropped my first sponsor by not calling her anymore and losing touch ‘on purpose’...just so I didn’t have to be ashamed of not having anything or anyone that I believed was actually a greater power than me. Ha! The funniest thing is “Spirituality” is exactly what brought me to my 2nd sponsor. When I say Spirituality, I do not mean “religion”, I am simply talking about certain spiritual principals that I followed which, in turn, brought me a wonderful life. These Spiritual Principals I used in my life were “honesty” and “open-mindedness” and yes, this was enough to find a great sponsor who helped me understand and work Step 3. By practicing Honesty and Willingness, and by having faith in the program, I allowed my sponsor and you guys in the NA fellowship to teach me that all I needed to be my HP was the rooms of NA. Then, I grew more open and made a counselor my HP, and then by the grace of my HP, which I call God...I eventually got baptized...who would have ever thought “I” would attend church? I know I couldn’t have been alone when struggling with a HP back then because if I were alone I would have never made it to work Step 12....that is definitely a miracle in itself! From my experience, I took it one day at a time, remembered the saying, “Easy Does It”...and when I wasn’t looking for it- the miracle happened. By following the first and second Steps in my own time and being completely honest...Step # 3 came to me right when I was ready.

My second sponsor taught me that there was actually a huge difference between finding something that was “A Power greater than me” and finding “a religion”. I thought I had to believe in one (and only one) certain religion to get through my step 3....and this was very hard for me to accept, not to mention scary. Because of NA, I am not afraid of this spiritual program anymore. Thank You Kim B. and Narcotics Anonymous!

Anonymous

Recovery Prayer

By: Rob G

When my faults and shortcomings start to take me over
I pray to my Higher Power, GOD for:
The ability to overpower the negative with,
To have all working senses
Strong Faith
Trust
Hope
Tolerance
Patience
Love
Peace
Forgiveness
Not to be judgmental
Wisdom
Courage
Serenity
To have high spirits
And good humored
So I may regain control of my emotions and have a
Fulfilling and pleasant day.
We always welcome a sunny day.
I know I can always count on my Higher Power to be by
my side.
Thank you that I may be clean enough to have another
Happy Birthday with the ones I love the most,
My family.
God bless us all.

A newcomer once asked, “Is it true that if you stop praying and doing God’s will, bad things will happen to you?” His real question and concern was this: Does God punish us if we quit or abandon our spiritual practice? To answer that question, let’s consider this. If you stop brushing your teeth, and then develop tooth decay, would that be God punishing you? Of course not. If you jumped off of a ten story building and died as a result, would that be a punishment from God? Definitely not. These are just the natural consequences of those behaviors. There’s no punishment involved. Taking care of our spiritual health is much like taking care of our bodies. There are benefits for having a consistent practice, and consequences if we stop. Will bad things happen if you stop praying and doing God’s will? Yes. You’ll soon be alone with the insanity of your disease. Is that a punishment from God? No, just the consequences of not working a program.

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September Issue Topic

If you have not noticed, we unfortunately do not have any Gay & Lesbian NA Meetings in our Area. The Narcotics Anonymous Program is a "WE" Fellowship of Men & Woman who all have the same reason for surrendering to this program: We do not want to die from this disease of addiction! If you're an NA member and you're Gay, Lesbian, or Bi...then what do you do after you pick up the white key-tag of Surrender, then attend an NA meeting in our area, and feel the NEED to talk about your recovery "Openly & Honestly"? How does the fact that we do not have Gay & Lesbian NA Meetings in our area affect you and your life?

We Recover on the Bones of Others

If you are here to read this, think of those who aren't. Pray for them: good thoughts for those who lost their minds, love and years to compulsion, addiction and fears. Think of their great sacrifice.

We recover on the bones of others. Wrap your loving thoughts around them: alone no more.

If you are here and recovering your original shining true self, a moment of silence for those driven mad by the voices and screams of disease-driven dreams. We walk from night to day on a path made of the bones of others. Hold them tightly in the warm arms of your spirit: cold no more.

If you are here and attaining freedom, a thousand bows for those who didn't reach this shore and drowned in a sea of despair: suffering no more.

We walk in freedom past cages made of the bones of others. They hand us the keys of desperation. Quench their burning thirst with the tears of your soul. Calm their cravings. Still their minds. Grant them peace in the dark and lonely places below and above the ground. Fill the gaping holes left by their deaths with the immensity of your love.

Remember them as you sleep; remember them as you wake. Only a thought is the difference between you and the bones of others.

From "The Zen of Recovery" © 1993, By Mel Ash

As time goes on, we find more addicts facing calamity with serenity and here is one of the surest signs of a valid recovery.

We know that this Fellowship can provide, if accepted, the means to a life free from drugs or even the need for them and this is the true miracle, the release from our obsession. Narcotics Anonymous must continue to exist and grow, if we now on the program wish to survive. If we fail to do this, then only a few, very few, will recover, the rest of us will surely, as before in the history of man, go down the road of desperation, calamity and death.

Miracles Happen: A few of Jimmy K's thoughts on recovery and the importance of our fellowship. Page 42

Some of us arrive in NA with a closed mind toward a Power greater than ourselves. But when we sit down with our sponsor and discuss our difficulty, looking at the Second Step in depth, we are pleased to find that we can choose any concept of a Higher Power that appeals to us.

Just for Today Book, July 5, Pg. 195

FRCNA XXVIII

I just had the best time I have ever had in the 5 years, 9 months, and 13 days of my clean, new, wonderful life! I have heard people in the rooms speaking of conferences, yet, for some reason, I never felt the need nor wanted to go? So, by the grace of my HP and all of you in the Bay Area Rooms of NA...I “left my house”, that’s right, I actually left my hermit crab shell, and I went to Orlando, Florida.

The Doubletree hotel was full of “NA Family” from all over the world! There were about 1,000 to 2,000 people walking around, staying up late, dancing, going to a late night comedy show (this guy was awesome!) , and just hopping from meetings to meetings all day and night long. Each meeting had at least 1 or 2 awesome Speakers, mostly they were from out of State but some were from Florida too. The Speakers were all great but there was one that especially stuck out to me, and the words she spoke were so uplifting, so true, and so badly what I needed to hear. She made me laugh, cry, and be serious with myself and she reminded me that I am an addict but I do not have to let my disease hurt me ever again with the help of all you great people!

I can’t count the times I actually cried tears of “JOY” and “GRATEFULNESS”. I went thinking I wouldn’t know anyone, but literally, “everywhere I looked- I saw someone I knew!” If I had a penny for every hug I received, I would have left with some serious cash. FRCNA opened my eyes to how BIG our Fellowship truly is and also brought me to feel a true state of “SERENITY”. I hope that next year, when FRCNA is in Tampa, that as many of you that can make it to FRCNA XXVIII, get up and actually GO! I promise you’ll be happy you did. And... Hint, Hint...the earlier you sign up and register- the cheaper it is to get tickets to the best events! However, no addict will ever be turned away from any NA meeting.

~Melissa W. 10/23/03

Re-living

In the beginning we were only innocent little girls with endless dreams: longing to be doctors, teachers, lawyers, even silly actresses that lived for the sake of a public smile. The last thing we dreamed of was becoming that which we hated, addicts.

But, the disease of addiction forced itself upon us, sucking the life out of us and our children. For most of us became young mothers, children having children. We sold our shells/ bodies to the lowest bidders; sometimes we laid down for a promise that was not real, but we laid down believing that drugs could and would ease our pain. Some of us spent years in and out of prison, as soon as we entered the so called society the disease activated in full force. Drug induced babies we brought to this earth, we just couldn’t stop! Nothing is always static, we have found a home in the fellowship of recovering addicts; we will no longer keep a mask that infects our spirits. We are women with new dreams: mothers that raise our children, teachers, lawyers, professors, philosophers, and women with integrity. We are daughters to our parents, sisters to our brothers, and friends to our friends.

Most of all, we have the willingness to take back our life from this deadly disease—we R free!!

Juan Carlos

WORD SEARCH STEP THREE

C H O I C E A S E C N E U Q E S N O C O
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 D V S T R E N G T H O I E C I T C A R P

- Choice
- OpenMindedness
- Honesty
- Experience
- Decision
- Necessary
- Strength
- Spiritual
- Will
- Commitment
- Guidance
- Fear
- Expectations
- Essential
- Desperation
- Miracle
- Gratitude
- Willingness
- Restoration
- Courage
- Realization
- Life
- Consequences
- Relief
- Practice
- Understanding
- Surrender
- Foundation

Created By: Melissa W.

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

Just one—he holds the light bulb and the whole world revolves around him.

A new definition for 13th stepping..

Steps 1 + 12, "My life is unmanageable and I want to share it with you!"

Did you hear there's a new 12—step program for people who talk too much?

It's called on-and-on-anon.

Humor Corner

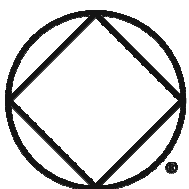


With Permission: Ben Ben, MD

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, Scottsmeer, 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

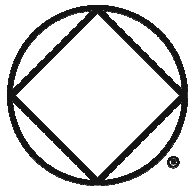


Area Service Committee (ASC):	9:30 AM 2 nd Sunday @ Terra Nova*
Hospitals & Institutions:	8:30AM 1 st Sunday @ Terra Nova*
Public Relations:	10:00 AM 2 nd Saturday @ Terra Nova*
Helpline:	11:00 AM Saturday before area @ Terra Nova*
Policy:	8:30 AM 2 nd Sunday @ Terra Nova*
Admin.:	9:00 AM 2 nd Sunday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



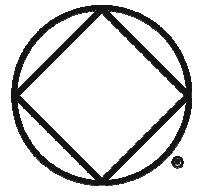
*Terra Nova is located @ 2800 41st Ave N. St Pete

Anniversaries—July & August

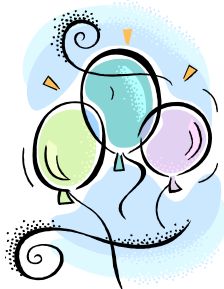


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GROUP:	NAME:	CLEAN DATE:	HOW MANY YEARS CLEAN:
A New Perspective	Mary	07/01/07	2
A New Perspective	Nancy C	07/20/06	3
A New Perspective	Sharron B	07/22/06	3
Bay Area Youth	Dave W	July	10
Bay Area Youth	Aaron M	July	12
Clean Harbor	John S	08/10/95	14
Clean Harbor	Jackie R	08/23/02	7
Dunedin Group	Barbee	07/06/05	4
Dunedin Group	Jim M	07/26/05	4
Give it Up	Damien R	July	1.5
Just For Today	Cassie J	July	6
Just For Today	Karen	July	9
Life's a Beach	Mark S	07/05/06	3
Life's a Beach	Robin A	07/06/02	7
Life's a Beach	Patty S	07/07/06	3
Life's a Beach	Keith	07/07/07	1.5
Never Alone	Tiffany	07/07/08	1
Never Alone	Ernest E	08/09/08	1
No Pain No Gain	Lynn J	07/21/06	3
Relax & Recover	Christina J	07/09/07	2
Relax & Recover	Nicole C	07/19/07	2
Save Your Ass	Jimmy S	07/01/08	1
Save Your Ass	Marty K	07/19/08	1
Save Your Ass	Charles W	08/04/04	5
Save Your Ass	Shangria W	08/16/08	1
Save Your Ass	Kelly S	08/22/08	1
Spiritual Solutions	Hector		2
Spiritual Solutions	Tina T		16
Sunshine	Sandy S	07/03/90	19
Surrender	Bill R	07/20/07	2
Surrender	Chastity R	07/20/07	2
Surrender	Troyette M	08/22/95	14
We Do Recover	Dick B	07/15/75	34
We Do Recover	Cathy B	07/15/75	34
Young Free & Clean	Alex K	07/01/07	2
Young Free & Clean	Sara W	07/21/06	3



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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.

ACTIVITIES

BOWLING NIGHT

July 17th, 9:30pm

Seminole Lanes

8668 Park Blvd, Seminole

\$13.00 Includes Shoes

I-275 N toward Tampa, take exit 26B to merge onto 54th Ave N, turn right at Park St N, turn right at FL-694/Park Blvd

TALENT SHOW

Sept. 19th, 5pm—?

Save the Date

**27th Annual Anniversary
of the Bay Area**

Get Involved

**We meet the 1st and 3rd Wednesday
of the month at Terra Nova, 6:45pm**

MEETING NEEDS

SUPPORT:

YOUNG, FREE & CLEAN

Friday 8pm

Albright United Methodist Church

Corner of 5th Ave. N. & 28th St. N

MEETING NEEDS

SUPPORT:

BEGINNERS MEETING

Wednesday 8pm

Alano Beach Club, Inc.

4615 Gulf Blvd. Suite #112, St Pete

MEETING NEEDS

SUPPORT:

WAKE UP CALL

Saturday 9am

Rebos

6766 54th Ave North, St Pete

As we grow, we come to understand humility as acceptance of both our assets and our liabilities. What we want most is to feel good about ourselves. Today we have real feelings of love, joy, hope, sadness, excitement. Our feelings are not our old drug-induced feelings. Basic Text: 5th Edition, page 97

***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.

"All we did was sow some seeds and worked and wrought to make this work, so that we and others could live -- in Peace, in Freedom and in Love."

Jimmy K

