JUST FOR TODAY

We attend
meetings and
make ourselves
visible and
available to
serve the
Fellowship. We
give freely and
gratefully of
our time,

January/February 2012

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service, and what we have found here. The service we speak of in **Narcotics** Anonymous is the primary purpose of our groups. Service work is carrying the message to the addict who still suffers. The more eagerly we wade in and work, the richer our spiritual awakening will be.

Basic Text,

Step Twelve

Our freedom, Our responsibility

Most of us came into Narcotics Anonymous with no clear sense at all of what "freedom" meant. The only freedom we really understood or wanted was the freedom to be left alone to pursue our self destruction without interference. Of course, NA changed all of that. Staying clean, working steps, getting involved, and building relationships with others and a Higher Power all have had a part in changing how we see freedom today. Recovery starts with the freedom not to use, and the freedom to change progresses to the freedom to live our dreams. As the Ninth Step essay in our Basic Text tells us, "In time many miracles will occur." Indeed. each of us who has been clean for any appreciable period of time, has seen those miracles unfold in his or her life. Where once we were afraid to leave our house or our neighborhood, now we travel and cross borders without fear. We have the freedom to build healthy relationships, to make choices, and to live comfortably.

Through NA we are given the ability to create lives of mean-



ing. We are the makers of our lives, not just the "takers" of what is given to us. Freedom is feels good to take responsibila gift that we cherish. We show ity for its well-being. We have that we cherish that gift by being of service. Just as the "miracles" about which the Ninth Step essay speaks are the result of the work we've done in the eight steps before it, most of us come to understand that the price of freedom is responsibility. Many of us were "drafted" into NA service when we were relatively new in the program because someone, often our sponsor, told us it is what we "have" to do. We let ourselves be dragged to group business meetings and service committees. When we participated we were taken out of isolation and we learned to care. We may have even taken a position and served to the best of our ability because we felt we owed that much to NA. Over time, we come to see that we owe it to ourselves as well. Being of service to others is a part of our Twelfth Step work, and the spirit of service comes to infuse all areas of our lives. We know we have to give it away to keep it.

What's more, we want to serve. This is our fellowship and it been given a precious gift and we must look after it. Though many of us got clean in places where there were plenty of NA meetings and literature, the health of NA rests with us, now and in the future. We have had an evolution; initially, we may have just done what we were told to do willing, if inexperienced, worker bees—but we become self-motivated trusted servants. We have developed a sense of self-worth through being productive, giving members of the NA community in which we live, work, play, and recover. We come to understand that responsibility is not a burden: it's just as much of a gift as freedom. We are citizens of a worldwide NA community and it's a privilege to contribute however we can. The guestions that follow invite us to talk about that understanding—how we put it into practice and how we can help others reach it. We have a responsibility to protect our freedoms.

Those of us who are active participants have made a transition from seeing responsibility as something we have to do to something we want to do.

Discussion Questions

- 1. How do I exercise my sense of responsibility in NA?
- 2. How can we help inspire others to become willing to share that responsibility?

It's worth taking some time to reflect together or individually on our collective future: What would the fellowship look like if we all reached this point and took responsibility to make sure that others have an opportunity to experience our way of life—that no addict need die without having heard the message of NA?



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 submissions to 200 - 400 words. The Newsletter is published bi-monthly, please provide submissions at least two weeks prior to print. Please e-mail all contributions to: lit@bascna.org

Please Note... The opinions expressed herein are those of individual contributors, and not the opinions of the Bay Area Literature Subcommittee, or Narcotics Anonymous as a whole. Narcotics Anonymous is not affiliated with any of the facilities mentioned. The Handbook for Narcotics Anonymous states, "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 Subcommittee 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 seeds of the miracles in NA are found in the following principles:

- 1. Hope gives us something positive to look for and move towards. We can admit our need for help as we begin to share in our common welfare.
- 2. Surrender to the things we cannot change through our own power is a way to get on with our lives. We seek a Higher Power of our own understanding and that becomes our ultimate guide and source of strength.
- 3. Acceptance allows evasion and denial to give way to reality and peace. With the care of God, we are granted the power to welcome new people and new ideas into our lives.
- 4. Honesty is the ability to match up our insides with our outsides. It allows what we don't care about to go away and what we really want to appear and develop in our lives.
- 5. Open mindedness is our bridge to the experience of others. It is the passageway out of loneliness into the life of the Spirit.
- 6. Willingness to try is the beginning of doing our part. However grand or humble that might be, it is a state of readiness replacing depression and anxiety.
- 7. Faith is the evidence of our trust in God. True faith is the result of surrender coupled with experience that God can and will do for us if we ask for help.
- 8. Tolerance is knowing the other person has the same spirit in them as us and being curious about what that spirit is trying to do.
- 9. Patience is taking time for things to move into place without force or breakage.
- 10. Humility is knowing the importance of doing our part well and being open to the many forms of help required for a full and abundant life.
- 11. Unconditional love is given where we sense our spirit in another human being.

12. Sharing and caring is the active and passive forms of love that keeps us alive and allowing God to use us as instruments.

Principles are the language of miracles. Increasing our language ability helps us make the right choices. Our minds often play tricks on us, due to our disease, and we use spiritual principles as guidelines to escape our old ways. These principles can be mimicked but unspiritual people lack certain characteristics associated with spiritual growth. Love, caring, patience, peace of mind are hard attributes to fake! We each have to reach a point of surrender to enter the state we call 'recovery.' In NA, we have our own spiritual awakening and this gives us our own evidence of the reality of the God of our Understanding. We have to have our own miracles for spirituality to be real to us. Without principles, it is easy to fall back into our comfortable rationales where most of the world is wrong and we, poor isolated victims, are lost in a world of fools. We learn or create words to describe what is going on in our hearts so others can help us and so we can help ourselves. Recovery is getting back with humanity.

Spiritual growth is discovering ways to put principles into action. To grow spiritually requires three things: surrender, learning and practice. We have found that maintaining our spiritual condition is the best safe guard against relapse. Our spiritual condition determines the quality of our life. Regardless of our station in life, it is possible to achieve a great state of mind and spirit. Many of our members spend a great deal of time in our meetings and functioning as part of our active service structure. Others go about their business in good faith and show their gratitude for recovery through personal service. Personal service is helping addicts seeking recovery.

Finonymous







Your Lit/News Letter Committee Needs You

We need your articles

We need your Input

We need Your Help to Review "Living Clean"

Please contact us at: lit@bascna.org Or Contact Gregg B. @ 813.380.0049 NEW MEETING

11TH STEP MEDITATION
10 AM SATURDAYS
TERRA NOVA
CLOSED/LEAD
DISCUSSION

TWELVE SIGNS OF A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

- 1. An increased tendency to let things happen rather than make them happen.
- 2. Frequent attacks of smiling.
- 3. Feelings of being connected with others and nature.
- 4. Frequent overwhelming episodes of appreciation.
- 5. A tendency to think and act spontaneously rather than from fears based on past experience.
- 6. An unmistakable ability to enjoy each moment.
- 7. A loss of ability to worry.
- 8. A loss of interest in conflict.
- 9. A loss of interest in interpreting the actions of others.
- 10. A loss of interest in judging others.
- 11. A loss of interest in judging self.
- 12. Gaining the ability to love without expecting anything in return.



A Walk in the Park

There's a darkness that lurks in the shadows of the indifferent and cruel, whose intentions are to banish the diverse from sight of their sore eyes. With daunting power they hold blue-prints to rid the lame and the lost into exile. It's a modern day apartheid right in our own backyard and is not limited to the color of ones' skin, but also the homeless, handicapped, drug-addicted and destitute as well.

This omnipotent force resides in the full bellies of the self-centered, feeding on fear and revealing itself in a spew of anger. Wearing glasses of intolerance, their perception is distorted as they point fingers in an attempt to separate what is unacceptable in their apathetic eyes. The officials arm themselves with a loaded pen, remaining shielded behind a solid desk, lest they dirty a cuff or collar. These discriminative, halfhearted human beings take refuge in vehicles of conventionalism, carefully keeping straight on narrow roads, for fear of venturing beyond the social familiar. After a long day's work antagonizing, they clear their conscious with warm cognac and take comfort in king size beds.

The derelicts begin to wake on cooled concrete and carefully pack their lives into bags of despondency before frowning faces appear and feet beat past off rhythm. The promise of sorrow slowly sets in once again, just as the scorching sun rises every morning. Burdened by self-pity and plagued with sadness, the lost wonder to and fro aimlessly through a maze of dead-end streets looking for an escape from reality. Calloused and cracked hands, stained with nicotine, persistently beg for spare change for contribution to numb their mental anguish. These so-called parasites lay on park benches carelessly killing time with not as so much as a single threaded thought in mind other than that of their next self-medicated fix. Finally, when

the night sky blankets the city, fresh cardboard and coat pillows are welcoming, for this is the only real sense of relief from a blistering day, there's a certain freedom about this.

If the main goal and priority were to sincerely help others in desperate need, having their best interests in mind, the chances of them receiving any assistance would be much greater. Unfortunately, more often than not, they are thrown into jails and institutions rather than given the proper guidance and tools to rehabilitate themselves back into society. Many will not even accept the minimal help offered to them and that's their right as American citizens. We all equally have the same freedom of choice and can choose to take up whatever public space we so desire.

The government is not the only one to blame for this prejudiced behavior; we too are guilty of shrugging them off like an insect or a pest. Cultural differences, lack of life experiences, closed-mindedness and ignorance are all contributing factors to the way we perceive them and how we act towards them, which is a total misconception. We cannot judge another by their outside appearances without truly knowing what's on the inside. We do not have an inkling of what a stranger may have been through in their journey of life.

What can we do? We need to start from the core center of ourselves as individuals, putting our own selfish needs aside, unifying as a whole. A bit of compassion, tolerance and a desire to understand will go a long way. Spare change and cheeseburgers are not the only things we have to offer. A simple smile or a kind word muttered to another can make all the difference in their world, possibly changing the course of ones' day, or life for that matter. Next time we have the opportunity lets challenge ourselves and take a walk in the park with an open-mind and an open-heart. This could be any one of us. Actually...



HELL'S 8TH LEVEL

ADMIT TO GOD, TO OURSELVES, AND TO ANOTHER HUMAN BEING

THE EXACT NATURE OF OUR WRONGS

As my ascension from the previous level left with a sense of discovery about myself, my liabilities and my assets, I find myself again being gripped by a familiar feeling, that of fear. As I did my preparations for my ascension from this level in the previous levels I was left with a sense of relief thinking that the hardest part was now over, only to find that I now face a new set of fears. The very thought of having to admit to another those things that I vowed to take to the grave with me leaves me in state of seemingly vulnerability. Again I turn to those who came before me and they give me these words of encouragement "it is essential that I know what my fears are and move forward in spite of them so that I am able to ascend from this level and continue this journey." Thus the essential things that I need above all to begin my accession from this level are courage and trust with these two things I can face my fears on a specific level rather those that appear general. Their hold is lessened.

My admissions first to God. My preparation in an understanding of a God began in the 1lth level and continued in the 10th. Again I find myself at a familiar place as I approach this admission. I invite the presence of my newly discovered God, Whom I have been able to depend on thus far in this journey. I make my admission, to the point and I begin to feel the presence of a God of my understanding.

My admission to myself, all the masks have been stripped away as I stand face to face with myself. I look at the true facts about me and I admit that yes this is me. For the first time I don't have to sound good for the sake of looking good. I hear this admission from my own lips breaking that pattern of denial that has plagued me for so long.

My admission to another human being. So now I call on all those things that I have used thus far but most importantly trust. I sit down with another person and I share my most intimate feelings and darkest secrets, what a major step. Someone who will help keep me focused and not allow me to blame others for the

things that I now share with them.

The exact nature simply defined as the essential prosperities of my behaviors. Again I look to those who come before me and they offer me the following tools for my ascension from this level

- Trust: again I remember the progression that I have followed..HOPE TO FAITH TO TRUST. Trust the Process becomes not just words but has a meaning as I trust in the experiences of those who have come before me. The ground work has been laid that will be the foundation of relationships that I continue to develop.
- Courage: again I am reminded that courage is not the absence of fear, but the determination to move on despite that fear. I find that I can continue this journey with the help of those that have come before me. I express my fear and they share their own personal experiences with me thus lessening my fears. My journey must continue with this help I move forward.
- Self-Honesty: something that I have yet to have labeled thus far. Though throughout this journey I have discovered different levels of honesty, for the first time since this journey has began I see how important it has become that I am completely honest with myself concerning the "exact nature" of those things that I wish to be done with.
- Commitment: such a **primo concept** I am taught by those that have come before me that I must continue on path no matter what the level of uncomfortably. I desire to move forward.

With these things in mind I reflect on the beginning of this journey. As taught by those that have come before me I am given these words; "We carry within us the honesty it took to make our initial surrender, the faith and hope we developed in coming to believe in a power greater than ourselves, and the trust and willingness required to from us when we made our decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of God. Our hearts were touch by the humility of believing in that Power. On this Spiritual foundation we lay the principles of....."

I am told that I learn the rest in the next level. With this in mind and my spirits and hearts lifted by a new degree of trust I must move on. With these I ascend for Hell's 8th level.

Samuel 96.

My Spiritual Awakening In Regards To The Holidays

The holidays can bring about many uncomfortable feelings for the majority of addicts. Some of us had parents in their active addictions whom as children made our childhood challenging. As we walk through another holiday season it seems for many addicts tensions are fueled by the unexpected holiday demands placed upon us by our family and friends. As addicts, if these expectations are not met we have a tendency to take our frustrations out on whomever is around. In my case this year I have come to a place of having minimal expectations on myself and others. I can credit this spiritual awakening to working the twelve steps of Narcotics Anonymous.

In the twelfth step it states, "Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts, and to practice principles in all our affairs"- "as a result of these steps" implies that work has to be done before the spiritual awakening is achieved. I have had many spiritual awakenings as a result of this program and through working the twelve steps of Narcotics Anonymous.

Firstly, admitting I was an addict started the process of the awakening. Secondly, attaining a sponsor who had working knowledge of the steps was the next part of the awakening. Lastly, slowly seeing subtle changes over time in my life demonstrated to me that the program was working. This year one of those subtle changes is allowing my family to be themselves during the holidays, and not try to change my family. I relinquished those unwanted holiday expectations and traded it in for some faith and trust. And as we come to the end of another holiday season I have my sanity. Go figure the program works.

Written by: "T" Holdict.



Bay Area Service Committee Meetings

Activities	6:30 p.m.
Area SVC Committee	9:30 a.m.
Helpline	TBA
Hospitals & Institutions	8:30 a.m.
Lit/Newsletter	10:00 a.m.
Policy	8:30 a.m.

6:45 p.m.

Public Relations

1st & 3rd Wednesday, The Place

2nd Sunday, The Place

Sat. before 2nd Sunday, The Place

1st Sunday, The Place

1st Sat. Kristina's 3590 34th St N · St Pete

2nd Sunday, The Place

1st Thursday, 639 Edgewater Dr., Dunedin

Awakening of the Spirit

The root word of awakening is awake, so this implies at some point and time the spirit was asleep. This unconscious spiritual state was probably due to some sort of abuse to the spirit. In my case, I am talking about abusing the spirit with drugs. By slowly killing my spirit with drugs, I lost the true essences and values of life. The more I abused my spirit, it seemed to drift into a deep far away abyss. I eventually lost all contact my spirit and my life was in jeopardy of being lost to death or oblivion.

Now to the "Awakening of The Spirit."

Awake: to be conscious or aware of something (awoke to the possibilities).

I believe that a spiritual awakening is surviving emotional turmoil, finding inner peace, and loving my self on a deeper level. The healing process began when I started applying and living with spiritual principles in all of Life's circumstances.





Area Help Lines for the Florida Region

Bahamas... 242-426-5245 (naflorida.net/bahamas)

Bay Area (Saint Petersburg, Clearwater, Pinellas County)...

888-779-7117 / 727-547-0444 (bascna.org)

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Uncoast Area (Alachua, Branford, Gainesville, High Springs, Lake City, Live Oak, Newberry, Old Town, Worthington Springs) 352-376-8008 / 866-352-5323 (uncoastna.org)

Around The Area



Jan. 11 Every Wed 8:00pm - 9:00pm

Point of Freedom Group Speaker Mtg., The Place

Jan. 20 Galactic Bowling Fri. 9:30m -- 11:00 pm

Sunrise Lanes, 6393 Dr. MLK, St. Petersburg, FL

Jan. 21 3rd Sat Every Month 10:00am - 4:00pm

Work The Steps or Die, Serenity UMC, St. Pete

Jan. 21 P.R. Poster Hanging Day Sat 9:00am - Until

The Place, Pinellas Park, FL

Jan. 26 Last Thur. Every Month 7:00 pm - 9:00pm

Defeating Our Addiction, Potluck & Speaker Mtg., Gulfport Presbyterian

Feb. 12 2nd. Sun Every Month 9:00am - 12:00pm

Bay Area Service Committee Meeting, The Place

Feb. 19 3rd Sun. Even Month 10:00am - 1:00 pm

FRCNA Support Committee, Marriot Waterside, Tampa, FL

NA is not affiliated with any of the facilities listed.

Contact the Bay Area Service Committee Subcommittee e-mail

addresses are:

activities@bascna.org, areasecre-

tary@bascna.org,

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web@bascna.org

Or contact us by

pony express at

B.A.S.C.N.A., INC.

P.O. Box 703.

Largo, FL,

33779-0703.

Around The Region





Check Regional Website for Events

Jan 20 Sat 7:30pm—until

Pins in Pajamas (Bowling) Temple Terrace (Funcoast), F

Jan. 19 Thur. - Jan. 22

Palm Coast Spiritual Retreat, Palm Beach County, FL

Jan. 28 Sat. 5 pm— Until ??

H.A.C.N.A. Chili Cook-Off, Auburndale, FL

Apr. 27 Fri. — Apr. 29 Sun

Conch Republic "Recovery in Paradise" FL Keys

Apr 12—Apr 15 2012

Greater Orlando 2nd Annual Recovery At Sea Cruise

FUNCOAST AREA MEN'S SPIRITUAL RETREAT

CEDAR KIRK CAMP

1920 STREETMAN DR.

Lithia, Fl. 33547

Friday March 2nd—Sunday March 4th

Contact: Martin P. 813.237.0879

Florida Regional
Convention of NA
Subcommittee
Meets
Sunday February 19th
Tampa Marriot Waterside
700 South Florida Ave.
10:00am— 12:00pm

NA is not affiliated with any of the facilities listed.

Bay Area Anniversaries

Ashley H Dorothea M Jackie S.	Oct. 2 (Women and Recovery) M Sept.23 (Women and Recovery) Sept 15 (Women and Recovery)	5 years 18 years 20 years
Brenda C Debbie B. Erica F. Jessica W. Nancy E.	Nov.10 (Women and Recovery) Nov.8 (Women and Recovery) Nov.1 (Women and Recovery) Nov.29 (Women and Recovery) DEC. 2 Women and Recovery)	3 years 8 years 2 years 4 years 18 years
Jan. 1	Erica B, (We Found A Way Out)	1 Year
Jan. 1	Michelle P. (Dunedin Group)	1 Year
Jan. 1	Johnny B. (It Works)	3 Years
Jan 2	Jamie P. (Never Alone)	3 Years
Jan. 3	Brittany W, (We Found A Way Out)	1 Year
Jan. 4	Doug S. (We Found A Way Out)	4 Years
Jan 7.	Danny S. (Welcome Home)	1 Year
Jan. 13	Tara F. (New Attitudes)	2 Years
Jan. 14	Jessica B. (We Found A Way Out)	18 Months
Jan. 15	Jane (Sunshine Group)	2 Years
Jan. 16	Dave V (Life's In Session)	11 Years
Jan. 19	Ron K. (I.C.O.F)	5 Years
Jan. 20	Kevin L (Acceptance and Change)	2 Years
Jan. 20	Jose V, (We Found A Way Out)	1 Year
Jan. 21	John G, (We Found A Way Out)	4 Year
Jan. 22	Barry C. (New Perspective)	10 Years
Jan. 22	Jason C, (We Found A Way Out)	2 Years
Jan. 22	Toby P. (Never Alone)	3 Years
Jan. 26	Julie A. (Women and Recovery)	7 Years
Jan. 22	Aubrey L. (New Attitudes)	14 Years
Jan. 26	Richard H. (Welcome Home)	5 Years
Jan. 26	Don . (Welcome Home)	1 Year
Jan. 26	Bryan F, (We Found A Way Out)	1Year
Jan. 26	Kristen L, (We Found A Way Out)	18 Months
Jan. 28	Christine L. (Never Alone)	5 Years
Jan. 30	Patty S. (I.C.O.F)	4 Years



MEETINGS IN

NEED OF SUPPORT

Acceptance and Change

(Oldsmar Community UMC)

Always Here

(Terra Nova)

Just for Today

(Terra Nova)

Morning Serenity

(The Place)

New Attitudes

(St. Paul's)

No Pain No Gain

(West Care)

Primary Porpoise

(Calvary)

Serenity In Addiction

(Serenity Club)

Spoons R4 Coffee/Lighters R4 Candles

(Terra Nova)

Trust the Process

(G. Port Presbyterian)

NA is not affiliated with any of the facilities listed.

LIFE'S IN

SESSION

NEEDS SUPPORT

WEDNESDAY 8:00PM

1676 S. BELCHER

CLEARWATER, FL

Bay Area Anniversaries

Jan. 31	Travis L . (I.C.O.F)	9 Years
Jan. 31	Adrianna D, (We Found A Way Out)	18 Months
Jan. ?	Donna R (H.O.W. Group)	23 Years
Jan. ??	Jennifer P. (H.O.W. Group)	18 Months
Jan. ??	Bill W. H.O.W. Group	1 Year
Jan . ??	Bobby S. (It Works)	2 Years
Feb. 1	Sheryl A. (Woman and Recovery)	13 Years
Feb. 2	Jane P. (Women and Recovery)	2 Years
Feb. 3	Joyce W. (Women and Recovery)	5 Years
Feb. 3	Leelah J. (Young Free and Clean)	2Years
Feb. 5	Dan K. (Welcome Home)	24 Years
Feb. 14	Sheri S. (Welcome Home)	4 Years
Feb. 16	Mike P. (Life's In Session)	1 Year
Feb. 25	Donald S. (Life's In Session)	13 Years
Feb. 25	Earlene K. (Sunshine Group)	28 Years
Mar. 1	Emily M. (Keys to Recovery)	6 Years



SERENITY IN
ADDICTION
GROUP
NEW MEETING
FRIDAYS
8:00 PM - 9:00 PM
OPEN
DISCUSSION
631 TURNER ST
CLEAWATER, FL



