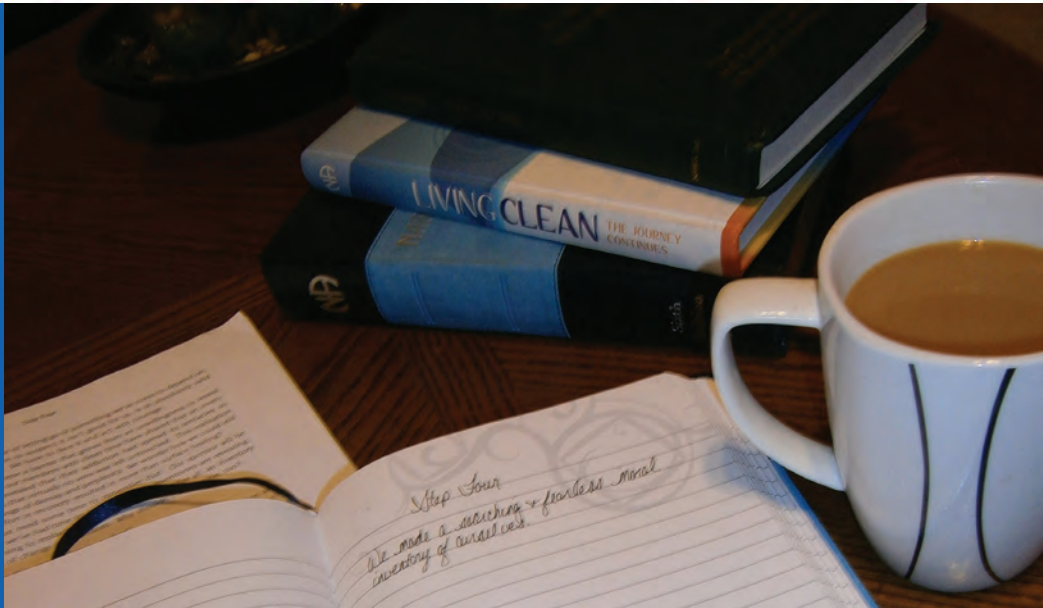


JUST FOR TODAY

On the Bay

May-June 2013
The Fourth Step Issue

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This is Not Going to Kill Me

I am a member of Narcotics Anonymous-A twelve step fellowship that has helped many addicts. I think as a member it is my duty to work thru the twelve steps, so I can in turn help some one else do the same-Work the twelve steps. I see far too many people in this fellowship either not working steps, or working them incredibly slow. I know from my own personal experience the steps are what gave me a lot of relief, and even more understanding of myself, others, and even a little understanding of my higher power. Most of all they saved my life. Steps 1,2,and 3, are the cornerstone of this program. They literally hold me up in ways I could never have done myself. So apparent these principles are after we have internalized them, but before they were another language to me. Terms like honesty, willingness, surrender, hope, faith. Words that I have heard or read many times. Words I thought I knew the meaning of. But if recovery has taught me one thing, it is that I don't know that much, and as a result, I really didn't know much about spiritual principles, I either had not practiced in years, or never have practiced. I had to be honest enough with myself, so that I could surrender, which made me willing to have some hope and that hope grew into faith.

Which brings me to the fourth step. The fourth step for me did not harm me in any way. It was not difficult, and the following steps have freed me from a a lot of the stuff that goes on in my head. I got to see my patterns. I learned the most from the assets part of the fourth step. It showed me that I am a good person that just got lost along the way. Seeing where my assets left me gave me a true understanding of the disease of addiction, and what was traded out to get one more. I stole from my Mother, friends, but most of all

Continued on next page

24-Hour Helpline
727-547-0444
Call before you use!

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The purpose of this newsletter is to keep Bay Area Narcotics Anonymous members informed of the events and happenings of the fellowship. Every attempt is made to adhere to NAWS & BASCNA's guidelines for newsletters. The content contained heron expresses the views and knowledge of it contributors, not NA as a whole. Please read this publication with that in mind.

Continued from the front page.

myself. My disease robbed me of a lot of opportunity, however gave me the greatest gift I have ever had. A new way of life. But the fourth step is just the beginning. Our literature warns us from staying stuck on this step. Step five was the most freeing of steps. The shame that I thought I had turned out to just be self centered fear. Learning how to take an honest appraisal of myself, I can go back to this step at any point. In fact I am going back to the fourth step right now in my recovery. There are a million ways to work the fourth step.

There are numerous worksheets, the step working guide, but I recommend "Working Step Four in Narcotics Anonymous."

Our literature also tells us that the best way to write a fourth step is "TO WRITE IT!!!"

So give yourself a break, and work this vital step.

Mike Mo

Searching

There's a fine line between genius and madness,
Between authentically heartfelt,
And potentially psychotic.
But Jesus doesn't pay the bills,
And poets can't dance.
So I am what I am, straight from the heart.
And if you'd cut me I swear I'd bleed art.
Only he who finds himself, himself;
Truly finds himself.
He must then be true to himself,
By being truly himself,
In thanks to himself,
For searching for himself within himself,
And saving himself, From himself.
By being truly himself, he's true to himself;
Because only then, truly, will anyone else.
He looks down in himself to see what he'll,
And accepts it all, as obscene as it seems.
A true madman never doubts his sanity,
There for he knows he's perfectly sane.
And you'd write like him too,
If you'd spent a single day in his shoes;
But just search and find you,
And to thine own self be true.

Stephan

CURRENTLY ON STEP 4

I am working Step 4 right now and almost finished. It has taken me longer to work this step than the other 3 steps combined. My sponsor broke Step 4 into pieces though so it was not too overwhelming to me. We have met 3 times on Step 4 so far and will meet 2 more times to complete it.

There sure are a lot of questions in the workbook on Step 4 but I keep plugging along. Honesty with myself has been easier as I work this Step. In the beginning of this Step, it was hard to be honest with myself but my mind would recall certain things that I had forgotten about (how convenient), so I then would have to write about that situation. I had to tell myself that my sponsor would not be shocked about anything that I wrote and would not be judging me. Believe me when I say that I had to get over what my mind was telling me and ask my HP for help each time I sat down to work this step and then again when I would remember something that I would have to add to my answers. I had to tell myself that I want to get better not just stay clean but get better and a bit more sane. To accomplish that goal, I must work the steps as honestly as I can and must be consistently working through Step 4.

I am grateful for this Step as I have learned quite a bit so far. I know that many of my predecessors have worked Step 4 which gives me the confidence and courage to finish this Step. Thanks to

NA I am clean today and I am enjoying my life clean. So I will finish Step 4 soon and will be happy when I am done cause Step 5 doesn't have that many questions, ha, ha. Got to have fun in this life and not take yourself too seriously. See, I learned something.

Anonymous



Meetings In Need of Support

HUMBLE HANDS

2nd & 4th Saturdays at 7pm
2460 Seville Blvd., Clearwater
American Sign Language Meeting

Serenity on the Southside

Mondays, Tuesdays & Saturdays at Noon
440 10th Ave S

A NEW PERSPECTIVE GROUP

Thursday 6:30pm
1320 20th Ave N, St Petersburg

Catch Your Dreams

Fri & Sat 8pm
6766 54th Ave N

GRATEFUL NOT DEAD

Thursday 7:00pm
Beginners Meeting
2927 Central Ave

ACCEPTANCE AND CHANGE

Friday 8:00pm
Starting Jan 4- New Meeting Format
207 Buckingham Avenue, Oldsmar, FL

CLEAN HARBOR

Saturday 10pm -Drydocks

DO YOU REALLY WANT TO KNOW

Monday 6:30pm
1676 N Belcher Rd. Clearwater

JUST FOR TODAY

10:00pm Friday & Saturday
2927 Central Avenue, St. Petersburg

PRIMARY PORPOISE

Wednesday 7:00pm
1615 1st St., Indian Rocks Beach

NO PAIN NO GAIN

Monday 8:00pm
1735 Dr MLK Jr St. S St. Petersburg

MORNING SERENITY

Daily 7:45Am @The PLACE

SERENITY IN ADDICTION GROUP

631 Turner Street, Clearwater
Thursday- 9am-10AM

STEP FREE

10721 61st Ave, Seminole FL
Thursday 8pm

Looking for Something to Do?

Point of Freedom Group

5540 Park Blvd.
Speaker Meetings on Wednesday at 8:00pm

DACNA XIV

May 3-5, 2013
600 North Atlantic Ave
Daytona Beach, Florida

Mother's Day Picnic

May 12, 2013
Fort DeSoto Park - Shelter #15
10:00am-4:00pm

Saturday Night Live

May 18, 2013
Speaker Meeting - Cajun Bob
3115 Dryer Ave, Largo

Work the Steps or Die...

Saturday May 18 - 10am-4pm
2750 5th Ave. North, St Pete

FRCNA "FUN"raiser May 18

Theme- Favorite Cartoon Character!
Orlando World Center Marriott, 8701 World
Center Drive, Orlando
<http://webdata.na.org/events/>

H & I Learning Day June 28

1676 Belcher Road
11:30 am to 2:00pm
SKITS - SPEAKERS - RAFFLE -FREE LUNCH

Unity Picnic- Funcoast June 9

6140 Turkey Creek Rd, Plant City
10am-5pm Rain or Shine

FRCNA 32 - July 4-7

8701 World Center Drive, Orlando, FL

Take Me Out To The Ball Game

Aug 13, 2013
ADVANCE TICKET PURCHASE ONLY
Tampa Bay Rays vs the Seattle Mariners
Jay M. 727-623-3246

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

To the Fellowship:

The Steps are an attempt to introduce structure. They are not meant as an effort to exert pain but to relieve it. If we want happiness and peace we will not obtain them with an undisciplined mind. Without discipline we cannot distinguish between joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, love and fear. We are now learning how to tell them apart. And great indeed will be our reward.

Ideas and principles found in recovery contain a way out of fear that will succeed. Nothing else will work; everything else is meaningless. But this way cannot fail. Every thought we have makes up some segment of the world we see. It is with our thoughts then that we must work, if our perception of the world is to be changed. If the cause of the world we see is our corrupt diseased thinking, we must learn those thoughts are what we do not want.

There is no point in blaming the world. There is no point in trying to change the world. It is incapable of change because it is merely an effect. But there is a point in changing our thoughts about the world. Here we are changing the cause. The effect will change automatically. Each of our addict perceptions of "external reality" is a pictorial representation of our own diseased thought process. One can well ask if this can be called seeing. Is not fantasy a better word for such a process, and hallucination a more appropriate term for the result?

Recovery introduces the idea that we are not trapped in our addiction because its cause can be changed. This change requires first that the cause be identified and then let go so that it can be replaced as guided by the Steps.

STEP FOUR "We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves."

Was it freeing, painful or both? Perhaps both, part of the freeing from what is painful. You feel the pain as it leaves you. The searching is where we begin to face ourselves with an inward focus and simply observe what is there without judgment. We start to become aware of our corrupted self concept eventually getting to the source of our misery as our search continues and finding what stands in contrast is the gift of a life new to us. For those beginning recovery do your best and remember our purpose, "Freedom from active addiction"! As an individual I find going to Step study meetings and the Step Working Guide to be beneficial in relearning.

I need to spend time with this Step.

Is there fear associated with the fourth Step? I was at a meeting one night and a young woman was beginning her fourth Step and she was beside herself with fear. Expressing her fear she disclosed "I am afraid of what I will become". That would seem to be what we are all afraid of, the unknown. What can we do other than exercise the Principle of Faith given in our Creation and recognized in Step three? I must keep in mind "I Am Not Alone" and we have those around us to provide strength and courage simply by asking. What will we become? Perhaps we will be as God Created us instead of the mess we made of ourselves. I like to see Step four as being a seamless migration of Step three in preparation of Step five. Hey there is an idea, if struggling with a step, back up to the prior Step and better prepare.

Moving on to the moral part of the inventory of ourselves I find I have a problem and it associates with my understanding the word moral. I failed Basic Morals 101. The last paragraph "A Moral Inventory" on page 33 in the Step Working Guide clarifies and solves the problem. The literature tells me to be mindful in relating the morality of others in taking my own personal moral inventory. Now we are talking nothing more than my own personal association with moral values. That is simply correctable.

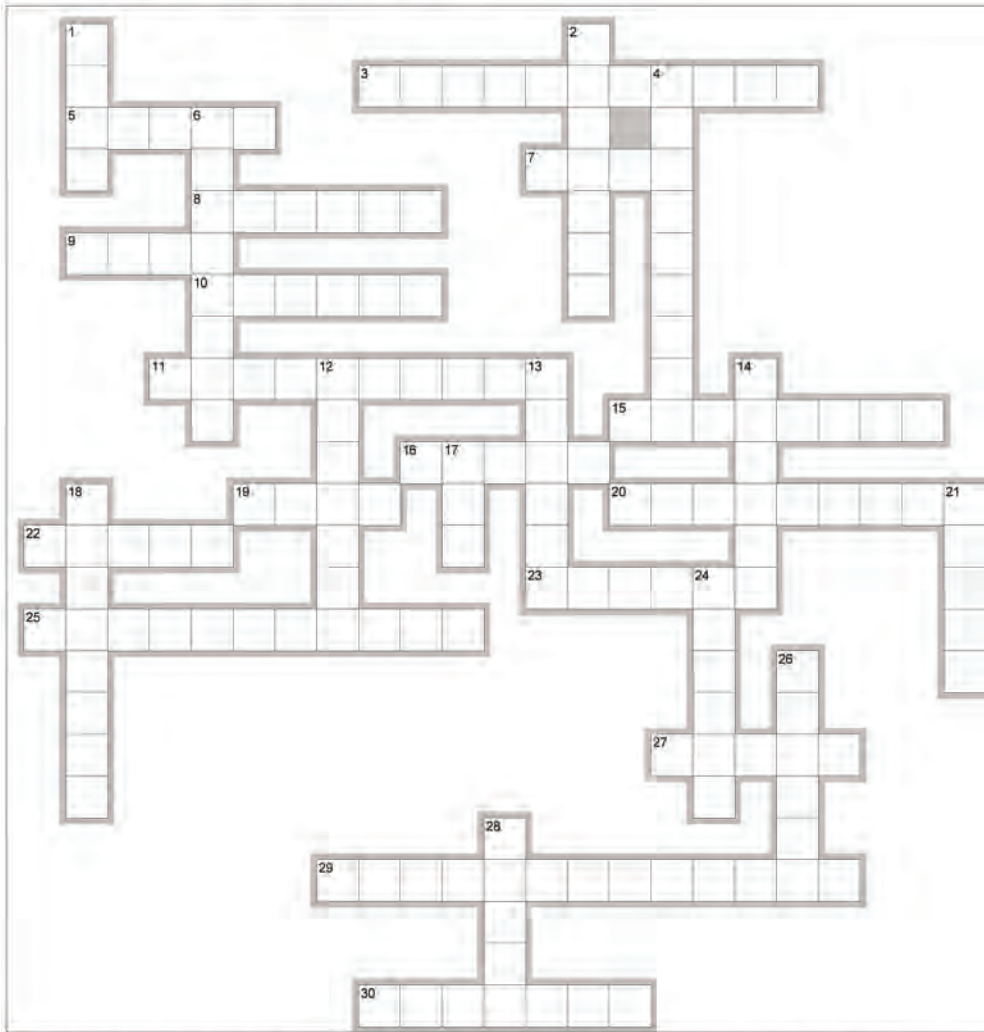
The inventory, here is where things get really interesting. We identify the unwholesome valueless ideas we have maliciously stored in memory (the guilt, denial and resentments or grievances to name a few) as well as our assets of human character or God given nature intoned in us all from Creation. That is all Step four asks, search without fear and identify what we have stored in our mind. No understanding necessary at this time. We are just looking. In that we identify what has brought us misery and suffering along with what brings us to joy and happiness. Having gone this far if you like you can recognize your better choices and feel free to change the association.

As for results there are many variables depending on the individual. Every step can be seen as a turning point where we are asked to redirect ourselves to something greater. As I progress in following that something greater I find a better life as a result.

Welcome to the New World,

Anonymous

“How It Works” Steps 4, 5, 6



Learning to use our literature helps us stay clean, the solutions are always in there.

All of the words in the puzzle can be found in the "Fifth Edition Basic Text" Chapter Four (pages 27 - 34)

Across

3. "We get _____ with our understanding of these steps." (pg 28)
5. "Perhaps this _____ difficult or painful." (pg 29)
7. "We have found that _____ is a lack of faith..." (pg 27)
8. "Addicts tend to live _____ lives." (pg 32)
9. "Writing will _____ the lid off of our pressure cooker." (pg 30)
10. "When we pray and take _____, it always goes better for us." (pg 30)
11. "This step has the _____ of being difficult; in reality, it is quite simple." (pg 29)
15. "We found that we do not recover physically, _____ or spiritually overnight." (pg 27)
16. "We have found that fear is a lack of _____, and we have found a loving, personal God to whom we can turn." (pg 27)
19. "The important thing is that we do our _____." (pg 30)
20. "Although He already knows, the _____ must come from our own lips to be truly effective." (pg 31)
22. "We know that another addict would be less likely to _____ us with malice or misunderstanding." (pg 31)
23. "This step will _____ our motives and our actions." (pg 32)
25. "This is a step of _____." (pg 34)
27. "We must be done with the past, not _____ to it." (pg 28)
29. "We do not _____." (pg 32)
30. "These _____ grow in the dark, and die in the light of exposure." (pg 31)

Down

1. "We _____ make sure that they know what we are doing and why we are doing it." (pg 31)
2. ""We begin to long for _____ from these defects." (pg 33)
4. "Where we were proud, we now find that we cannot get away with _____." (pg 33)
6. "We learn that we are growing when we make new _____ instead of repeating old ones." (pg 34)
12. "When we ignore our feelings, the _____ becomes too much for us." (pg 29)
13. "Sharing the exact _____ of our wrongs sets us free to live." (pg 30)
14. "Willingness is what we _____ for in Step Six." (pg 33)
17. "We were entirely ready to have God remove _____ these defects of character." (pg 33)
18. "Eventually faith, _____ and acceptance replace pride and rebellion." (pg 34)
21. "We may _____ be able to remember all of our past mistakes." (pg 32)
24. "We _____ approach old defects with an open mind." (pg 33)
26. "_____ self-assessment is one of the keys to our new way of life." (pg 27)
28. "We _____ about the things that bother us here and now." (pg 28)

My 4th Step

First, I think it is great that the area has a newsletter. Many areas throughout the country cannot provide their addicts this forum for recovery. Second, I want to thank the trusted servants who have the privilege of doing the work to make this newsletter happen. I had heard when I first came around that there were people in NA who write, and then there were the rest of us. Writing is a spiritual principle and I have a disease that is non-spiritual in nature. The guide we had sucked, it was redundant. I was not ready to do that. Pretty soon I found myself missing the weeks where my home group was reading and sharing on steps 4 & 5. I had even come to taking my notebook and guide out for rides in my car. When my car overheated one day and I was stuck in a parking lot waiting to get going, I started to write a "grudge list." After writing down grudges for over an hour and not even having a reason for many of them, something happened. I realized I had a grudge against everybody and everything. I started to cry. I also realized I did not want to live like this anymore. It had taken 3 years of having a step meeting as my home group to squeeze out my first "official" 4th step.

The pain of not writing had become greater than the pain of writing.

I had finished my second 4th and was sitting down with my sponsor to start my fifth. Within this 16 page inventory was one paragraph that cited the fact that I could possibly be the father of a young child. It referred to the fact that I buy Christmas gifts for the children of my friends (some of whom I didn't even care for) while a little girl was in this world without the benefit of knowing her father. My whole 5th step ended up covering this paragraph reviewing very little else.

Yes, I felt I was living dirty not being responsible. I could tell you all I had done much to straighten out this paternity some years earlier without being successful. I had grown up in a single parent home knowing what it felt like not to have a father. I have (and still have) some of the rage that emanates from that void.

So, my sponsor first suggested that I find out if this girl was truly my daughter. To do so I would need to contact the mother. So I started to make limited

inquiries to the few people in my hometown who had met her. Nobody knew where the mother had gone. This freed me somewhat from the underlying guilt and shame. I was asking around. No one I asked knew anything. There you go (I won't tell you the idea of paying all that back child support in addition to the possibility that my daughter maybe telling me to go screw myself was not on my mind).

One day I was sitting in a meeting. A woman I knew from childhood had become a member of this group. The father of my daughter's brother additionally started to attend NA at this point. The mother had a son born less than a year after my daughter. The two were dating. I found out that the father had no idea where the mother was as well.

I was speaking to the women one night and she agreed to bring me a picture of the girl. When I saw the picture, there was no need for a blood test. I let all of the people in my life know I was actively searching. Less than a year later another addict told me he had found the mother's address in a state database. She had been living in the central part of the state. I was able to get a possible phone number. I made the call.

I met my daughter at a mall near her home. She had just turned 15. She was beautiful inside and out. My fears were what they generally are; the lies my disease attacks me with. I did not have to pay back child support. She accepted me as her father. The beautiful girl grew into a beautiful woman. She has now blessed me with 3 grandchildren. I never thought I would come to love a little voice calling me "Grandpa."

I was six years clean when I wrote those few sentences in a fourth step. I was 11 years clean when we met. I always thought it was highly "coincidental" how all of these connections happened. Through the love and support of the fellowship, I was able to be responsible and relieve some of the guilt and shame that is prevalent to this disease. I will always be grateful that I was able to find the courage and guidance to take that personal inventory. Just amazes me how a few sentences of self insight provided the catalyst to make such life affirming decisions.

Anonymous

The 4th Step - COURAGE

Some may or may not enjoy this addict's perspective, however it is my perspective. I can remember attending NA meetings early on and hearing other addicts share about how they were afraid to work and live the 4th step and the principles within. Sharing how telling someone all of the bad things they have done in their past was scary and being afraid of the 4th. It's my experience that the 4th step is just writing my past and patterns, writing my liabilities and assets. Because I heard this shared in meetings I too was afraid to do a 4th step because I was not ready to look at those things. What I found though was my journey to the 4th gave me a different set of principles that I did not have when I walked into NA. I learned the 4th had performed multiple miracles for me. I have learned after speaking with several members and thru my own experience that those that have shared about how bad a 4th step was and how fearful it is; had not done one. The other side to that are those that had not thoroughly done 1-3.

What the 4th step did for me.

1. It allowed me to see patterns in my behavior that I have not seen previously. Ways I have been acting out since I was a child.
2. It allowed me to emotionally grow up. As I now have an opportunity to feel the emotions of some past transgressions that I should have felt ages ago! This skyrocketed my emotional growth.
3. It also allowed me to setup what would be the most helpful part of the next few steps.
 - a. 5th step I found the exact nature of why I was doing what I was doing, the self-centered reasons, the truth behind my actions and not the illusion I justified.
 - b. 6th step My character defects came from the patterns of my 4th step
 - c. 7th step My Shortcomings were revealed by my actions from my past with all the writing I had done and patterns that surfaced.
 - d. 8th step My list was already created from the 4th step by my writing everyone I had harmed included myself.
4. I also realized thru the assets I had written I was not a totally bad person; there were a lot of things I had done in my life that were good and helped others including myself. That I had some good memories and when I wrote these things I could not deny them. I also showed love in a lot of areas of my life and it helped me to believe it was possible to be that way again.

Finally, after the 4th step; a weight that I had not known existed was lifted from my spirit. I no longer resented as many people. I could see a portion of me I never saw. I could understand why I did some of the things I had done and why I am that way I am today. I learned how to forgive myself. I could identify feelings I never could identify before. I could separate anger from hurt and disappointment and discouragement and uncomfortability. Feelings weren't just Anger any more. I truly felt a GOD working in my life.

I found the next stage in my Freedom.

Just an Addict

"Addicts tend to live secret lives...It is a great relief to get rid of all our secrets and to share the burden of our past."

Basic Text, p. 33

Area Help Lines for the Florida Region

Bahamas	242-426-5245 (naflorida.net/bahamas)
Bay Area	888-779-7117 / 727-547-0444 (bascna.org)
Big Bend Area	877-340-5096 / 850-224-2321 (bigbendna.org)
Chain O' Lakes Area	352-319-5617 (colana.org)
Daytona Beach Area	800-206-0731 / 386-628-0318 (daytonana.org)
First Coast Area	904-723-5683 (firstcoastna.org)
Forest Area	352-368-6061 (forestna.org)
Gold Coast Area	888-524-1777 (goldcoastna.org)
Greater Orlando Area	407-425-5157 (orlandona.org)
Greater Pensacola Area	850-496-1673 / 850-723-4813 (pensacolana.org)
Gulf Coast Area	866-389-1344 (nagulfcoastfla.org)
Heartland Area	(naflheartland.org)
Midcoast Area	561-393-0303 (midcoastarea.org)
Nature Coast Area	352-464-4135
North Dade Area	866-935-8811 (northdadearea.org)
Palm Coast Area=	561-848-6262 (palmcoastna.org)
Recovery Coast Area	727-842-2433 (napasco.org)
River Coast Area	352-382-0851 / 352-754-7200 (rivercoastareana.org)
Serenity Coast Area	904-358-NANA (6262) (serenitycoastna.org)
Space Coast Area	321-631-4357 (spacecoastna.org)
Suncoast Area	941-257-5055 (suncoastna.org)
Sunset Coast Area	888-435-7301 / 239-249-1398 / 239-591-2804 / 888-435-7301 (sunsetcoastna.com)
Tampa Funcoast Area	813-879-4357 (tampa-na.org)
Treasure Coast Area	772-343-8373 (treasurecoastareana.com)
Uncoast Area	352-376-8008 / 866-352-5323 (uncoastna.org)

Visiting another AREA. Call their helpline # or check there website to find meetings.



You can also view the
newsletter in color
on our website.
Visit www.bascna.org



Dreaded 4th Step

Ahhh, yes, the dreaded 4th step...or as I like to refer to it: the root canal of recovery; the bane of my existence; the pain that passed all my understanding. And I was just feeling the glow of incorporating first 3 steps into my recovery on a daily basis! Talk about a rude awakening! I was just settling into the honest belief that my life has been largely unmanageable and that I am powerless over this disease that has made it so. Then, I get a reprieve in the 2nd step, when I find out that a little open-mindedness will lead me to believe that a power greater than myself exists and can restore me to sanity! Next, in the 3rd step, what a bonus! All I have to do is make a decision to turn my will and life over to this higher power (God, as I understand him) and I am on my way! Except that... life just showed up in the guise of my dentist, and I have to immediately take care of that infection in my molar that I ignored for 10 years while my whole life was centered in the getting and using of drugs.

So with a little reflection, I begin to take a fearless and moral inventory of my mental and dental transgressions. Am I scared? You betcha! I have never, ever, even consciously glanced at my actions before and I have lived a fully fear-filled life up to this point. Don't even get me started on the moral inventory; the only moral I have ever known is the one at the end of the stories that well-meaning friends and family constantly tried to tell me in the hopes that I would quit using! But, I seem to remember hearing something about the first three steps being the faith building cornerstones of recovery and I don't want to stop my forward progress now... so I'll schlep on over to the endodontist's office and let her drill deeply into my infected tooth (soul). The noise in my brain is terrifying! I really didn't think it was going to be this bad. I want to rip the drool bib off my neck and head to the hills! But I don't. I need to hear how I harmed myself and others. Those first three steps kick back in and I surrender to the process...after all, soon I will be sharing all this with my sponsor or another human being I trust and the pain will start to slowly dissolve; of course, I'll have to wait till the Novocain wears off my tongue and my chipmunk cheek goes down. Taking a nappy and getting a massage tonight might not be bad ideas either!

Feeling pretty good now; in fact the wreckage of my dental/spiritual and mental history has lost its power over me! I almost escape when the lovely life receptionist (my sponsor) tells me I need to examine the defects of character that popped up in my 4th and 5th steps!

Darn it, I was so close to escaping...and now she hands me this hefty little bill: I have to become entirely ready to have all these tactless faux pas' removed from my social-personal record! OMHP! What will I become without them? A mental/dental hygiene freak without any individuality or the endearing little quirks I have cultivated all these years? And now she is telling me that I must humbly ask that all my shortcomings be removed! Goodbye tendency to forget to floss; hello, Ms. Waterpick; welcome new-fangled sonic brush designed, to purify my teeth, mind, and soul. Well, I guess things could be worse... I could just continue to flip off drivers in rush hour traffic, cancel commitments, or indulge in sporadic bouts of road rage. But, after all, those kinds of things really haven't been working for me for a while now, anyway. Whoa, whoa, whoa! What's this late breaking news and 9th step assignment? Now I have to make direct amends to people I have harmed, except when to do so would cause further damage?

Does that further damage include the financial disaster that will harm me when I get the crown installed on the root canal tooth? No? What do you mean it's not all about me? Apparently, I have to right my wrongs even if think those I have harmed also should be apologizing to me! Well, then what exactly is the point of this 9th step??? Oh, doing the right thing and freeing myself for happiness, joy and freedom beyond my wildest dreams? I think I can get behind that! And by the way, I am really looking forward to the maintenance steps: 10, 11 and twelve! But, just for today, I am NOT ready or willing to have another root canal!

Melanie C.



Poetry Corner

I took three steps forward
And a fourth step back.

-Back to the darkness of my childhood fears,
-Back to the beginning that really a start to the end,
-Back to the wreckage of my past.

And there, I wept-
combusting with anger and loss,
surfing helplessly on dark waves tossed
onto a beach I'd never dared to tread upon
because I felt so unworthy.

Then, atop a plateau, haloed in light,
I spied you, my confidant and captain,
waiting to steer me through
my ancient, battle-weary story.

As we gazed inward,
our hearts and tears
mingled and there, within, I felt the knowing-
and entered into a place of Love and Home
that prophets traverse effortlessly.

Melanie C.

Feelings arise with highly involved intentions -
Future is bright with the past reflections,
It seems more complete than ever before;
And with it purity, honest, hence y amor.

So, just as she attempts to better define -
Whether her left is gray, cloudy, or devine,
The moment that's anticipated above all else;
would be the day she can truly whole - heartedly,
understand and accept herself.

Strange sometimes the roller coaster we ride.
At times we attend for enjoyment others we use it to
hide, Yet, most recently she had thought to break the
trend - And to her dismay that pattern had yet to end!

Nevertheless, as the ink lays itself on the paper
she'd have to succumb to this pertinent fact
that her willingness to feel different, make the
needed changed, lies on her ability , this effort
to ACT!!

Anonymous

Cultivating a Higher Love

If I make the statement that I love you, but don't necessarily like you, I am surely coming from a place of fear and denial of my own shortcomings: Denying that I recognize the pain that creates the behavior that you exhibit that I am repelled by Denying that I have acted out in similar ways Denying my fear that I may lapse into that same behavior again Fearing that you will dislike me; so I jump to reject you first Fearing that I am unworthy of forgiveness and unconditional love myself Fearing that reaching out to you will make me unpopular Instead, I can make a choice to surrender more deeply to my Higher Power And set myself, and you, free from all this judgment and reap these rewards: An embodiment of the truth that we ARE all one; united at the soul level A liberating new level of self-acceptance Banishment of my fear of growth and continued success in recovery Faith that love truly is the answer and always the best response Belief that I don't need to be perfect and forgiveness is God's default behavior Understanding that love is limitless; the more I give of it, the more I receive and feel it

Please be patient with me as I evolve from my simple awareness of all these things Into joining with what, I am sure, is God's will for me: To joyfully embrace this highest expression of love in my heart and soul and to it let it flow freely.

Melanie C.

Clean Harbor Group is starting a open discussion
campfire meeting March 21st at 8:00pm

The Dry Dock Center
1733 Alt. 19, Tarpon Springs.

Your Support would be greatly appreciated!



Working My 4th Step

One of the things I truly lacked when I was in and out of the rooms was self-awareness. I had a desire to do what was good and healthy for me, but I seemed to always give in to impulsive behavior and before I knew it I was wondering, "How did I wind up in this spot...again?" I also thought that I knew myself well but I really did not; instead, my ego had me in the grip – I was afraid to explore the truth about who I really was because I was terrified that I might find out I was not the person I had imagined myself to be. I was trying to hide myself from myself - now that is real self-dishonesty.

Working my fourth step addressed this dilemma directly. For sure, I made progress by surrendering, becoming willing and by taking the first three steps with my sponsor, but for me the fourth step was what really gave me some big-boy tools. By writing in depth about my resentments, my relationships, my fears and other areas of my life, I was able to begin to see patterns objectively and truthfully with the help of my sponsor. It wasn't always pleasant. There were a few times that major realizations left me feeling extremely raw for days afterwards. But the beauty was that I was able to lean heavily on my higher power and make the decision to trust that I would get to the other side. I chose to be courageous and walk through the fear...and I survived it.

A result of walking through that fear is that I am now less fearful and far more confident. I can see it and others can too – they have told me. Working the fourth step has helped me discover and accept who I am, not just on an intellectual level but on a much deeper one. I love myself today. Because of this I have a newfound faith that I am truly okay and that I deserve to recover. I have a new confidence that I have what it takes to do what is in my heart to do, and so my fourth step has also helped me take steps to just do it, whatever it is. I feel confident that not only can I stay clean and recover, but I can also be successful in whatever I do because I am beginning to know who I truly am.

Another thing that is huge for me is that having had a glimpse of my defects and their root causes, I'm now able to recognize them in real time when they arise. This, in turn, allows me a moment's pause to make healthy decisions instead of harmful ones. I don't have to act out on my defects now – today I have a choice. I never had the luxury of this pause before – I used to just react and wonder why afterwards...and then feel like a real idiot. Having this gift helps me to respond to situations and choose my words more effectively because I'm less likely to speak from a place of fear and ego. And because my decisions create my reality, life has gotten so much better because I am making better decisions.

I am extremely grateful I worked the fourth step and that my sponsor helped me through it. It was a gift and I am glad I chose to receive it.

Anonymous

MEETING ETIQUETTE

- If you have to walk in and out of a meeting for whatever reason, wait for a pause in the sharing.
- Try not to talk with the person next to you while someone is reading or sharing.
- Feel free to do the key tags with a celebratory feel, embrace your joy.
- Have a real moment of silence. Some of us believe we were prayed into the rooms during those 10—15 seconds.
- Turn your phone off before the meeting starts. Our lives depend on this life saving message. Put it on vibrate silly.
- Be a good listener, people get their feelings hurt when you walk out every time a certain person shares.
- Show up early and stay late to get to know one another better.
- Share about everything, use over nothing.

The Bay Area Newsletter needs You!

It can be a personal story of how you, the Fellowship, or your Higher Power helped to get you through a tough time; your views on a particular quote from the NA literature that you happen to like; or a simple expression of gratitude. You do not have to be a professional writer, and please don't worry if you think you can't write well enough — we will be happy to make any spelling or punctuation corrections for you. The important thing is that you will be sharing your recovery with other addicts. After all, we can only keep what we have by giving it away. The length of your article isn't important, either. The only real criteria for submissions is that they reflect the message of Narcotics Anonymous and stick to the identification of ourselves as addicts suffering from the disease of addiction.

Email submissions to lit@basna.org. Thank you for your time, support and for getting involved.

Hugs and luvs!

Celebrate Recovery

My Gratitude Speaks...When I Care And
When I Share With Others The NA Way!

Stacy M	4/1/12	1yr	New Attitudes
Mel B	4/1/00	13 yrs	JFT
Jake P	4/09/12	1 yr	
Rhonda F	4/15/08	5 yrs	Relax & Recover
Josh R	4/15/06	7 yrs	SNL
Jake P	4/18/12	1 yr	SNL
Wes B	4/20/08	5 yrs	Beach Meeting
Richard H	4/25/09	4 yrs	Point of Freedom
Wendy S	4/29/05	8 yrs	A New Perspective
Lisa T	5/1/02	11 yrs	DOA
Luise G	5/6/03	10 yrs	Beach Meeting
Samantha B	5/7/12	1 yr	The Dunedin Group
Mark B	5/12/11	2yrs	We Do recover
Brook L	5/12	16 yrs	Wake Up Clean
Everette M	5/13/10	3 yrs	YFC
David B	5/13/01	12 yrs	DOA
Mark P	5/19/11	2yrs	We Do Recover
Emilee T	5/21/11	2 yrs	YFC
Fawn J.	5/11/93	20 yrs.	11th Step Beach Meeting
Michelle L	5/15/12	1 yr	Happy & Free
Michelle L.	5/15/13	1yr	
Brian H	5/15/11	2 yrs	YFC
Lisa S.	5/16/96	17rs	Noon Group
Miguel M	5/17/97	16 yrs	Relax & Recover
Megan D.	5/18/13	2 yrs	
Danita k	5/19/08	5 yrs	Basic Meeting
Dawn O	5/20/82	30 yrs	Welcome Home
Lisa M	5/20/10	3 yrs	Women & Recovery
Bruce G	5/21/08	4yrs	Welcome Home
Sophia S.	5/24/89	24 yrs	
Jason N	5/28/05	10 yrs	Life in session
Dan L	5/29/07	5yrs	Welcome Home
Dale H	5/30/07	5yrs	Welcome Home
Danette R	6/2/12	1 yr	SNL
Rob R	6/5/08	4yrs	Welcome Home
Plamen S.	6/7/12	1 yr	
Danette R.	6/21/12	1 yr	Sat. Nigh Live
Bill V	6/26/88	25 yrs	Noon Group
Mia S	6/21/12	1 yr	SIA
Tina S	6/23/11	1yr	Welcome Home
Deacon O	7/5/12	1yr	Welcome Home
Patricia S	7/12/12	1 yrs	Women & Recovery
Rosie Q.	7/12	14 yrs	Miracles Happen
Tommi C	7/13/10	3 yrs	Women & Recovery
Mike M	7/17/11	2 yrs	Do you really want to know
Marlon	11/5/11	18 months	Do you really want to know
Candice H	11/10/11	18 mnts	Morning Serenity
Joe J	11/10/11	18 mnts	Spiritual Solutions