

January/February 2020

# BAY area News

Narcotics Anonymous

## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR:

This is one way to carry the message of recovery and to reach sick and suffering addicts. On some days that is me. Please share your stories. Share your experience strength and hope or share your art. This is your newsletter. This is your area. All you have to do is email us at: [lit@bascna.org](mailto:lit@bascna.org) to submit something! *Thank You!*

*"A hug is a handshake from the heart."*

## HUGS NOT DRUGS

I must admit that this slogan seemed childish the first time I heard it. I was full of false pride when I arrived. I wanted others to see me as a tough guy. I had drug dealer mentality. I made sure I gave you the leave me alone look after the meeting was over. I was not into other males hugging me. I could not tell you the last time I had hugged my dad. After a week or two of meetings, and a few pretty girls, I started tolerating the hugs. Later in my recovery, and a few thousand hugs under my belt, I looked forward to the hugs. I even recall reading in a health magazine that a child should get three hugs a day. I guess I was making up for lost time. One awakening I had about hugs was when I was about 5 years clean. My friend, Sam and I, were giving a rather young addict rides to meetings. His name was Todd and he was 13 years old. One evening his mother called us into her house to ask us a question. She explained her

concerns. She said when Todd was using drugs he was seldom home with his family. Now he was in recovery every night, we would pick him up to go to a meeting, and still he was seldom home with his family. She asked if we put the meetings on television. That way he could have a meeting and still be home with his family. Sam and I were somewhat taken back by her comments. We looked at each other hoping one of us had a response. There was a moment of silence. Then Todd spoke up, and he said "Mom, you can't hug a TV".

**Jimmy S.**

*"I love hugging. I wish I was an octopus, so I could hug ten people at a time."*

*Drew Barrymore*

**Bay Area website: [bascna.org](http://bascna.org)**

**24-Hour Helpline 888-779-7117 Call before you use!**

## **A Special Energy**

Most of Sunday and all day today, I have been trying to process the feelings that I experienced from this past weekend. I attended our Annual Sponsorship Gathering and had the opportunity to spend time with so many people that I admire so much. Not just for their recovery, but also for the way they live their lives, which is a result of recovery.

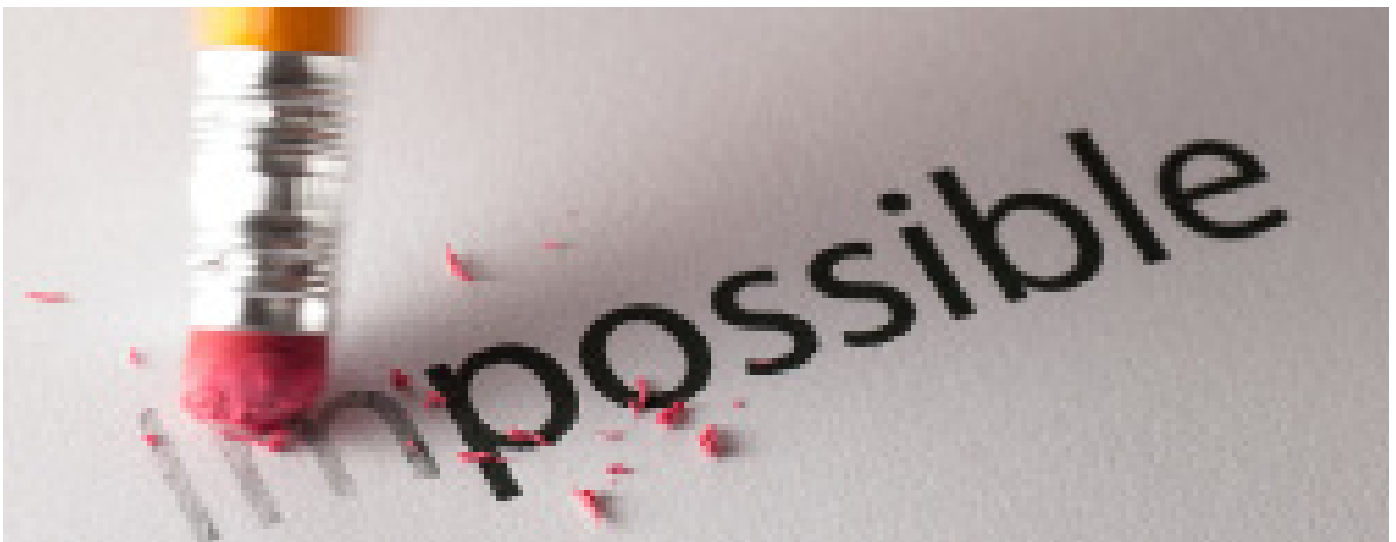
I got to listen to some of the predecessors share their experience and got to hear some of the history of our fellowship. There were people that were struggling and got vulnerable with everyone about what was going on with them. There were also people that had so many great things going on in their lives.

After processing all of it I've come to the conclusion that I don't believe it had anything to do with what anyone said throughout the weekend, but rather about the energies that I felt in those rooms. Every time I'm at a meeting there is always a great energy that makes me feel better than I did before I got there. That energy is what I felt this weekend; it was just magnified to a degree I didn't know was possible. I believe this energy to be love.

By feeling this love, it fights the fear that I still can live in, even with some time in recovery. I lived in fear of everything. Since doing some work I don't live in fear as much, but it is still there. I was asked to speak this weekend and those fears started to come up, but once I was in the room feeling that energy of love, those fears started to diminish.

After speaking and talking with some of the people that were in the room, I know that I'm on the right path and I don't have to live in that fear, so I'm going to continue to keep working, so I can get better, which then gives me more experience, so I can help the next person. I am so grateful for my predecessors and my peers and so grateful for all who live the program I'm going to keep coming back and I hope to see everyone, because I need everyone for my recovery

**Dan T.**



## **Courage**

Most people in this world believe courage is jumping out of a plane, riding a bull on your 16th birthday, or scaling a mountain inebriated to get to a waterfall. That's not courage, that's stupidity or a form of insanity. Courage is overcoming your fears of the unknown. Courage is helping someone, when no one else will. Courage is facing your fears and inner demons and be willing to change. So the next time you think of courage, remember...having courage or being courageous can affect you and your life forever.

**Samuel B.**

## Food For Thought

I was talking with another person in recovery last night. The movie *Rocket Man* was brought up. We then began speaking about the stigma of being an addict. I spoke about how it was cool to see these movies where the person is someone famous or well known, or a television show has a doctor or a professional who is in recovery. I talked about how a few years ago the stigma of being an addict was rampant, I remember being on Facebook and seeing comments from people that made my blood boil, where I would get into arguments with people about how judgmental they were, or about how they made a comment about letting that junkie die. I actually had to take a break from Facebook because of it. Now a few years later it seems to be much less. The stigma has lessened, it is still there.

What you focus on is what you tend to find. My experience has been one of connection and love. People don't seem to put that stigma on me, at least not to my face, and I don't see or hear it. The reality is that everyone is touched in some form by addiction in today's world. A friend, a loved one, the child of a close friend. When you think about it every single person knows someone who is, was, or will be affected by addiction. Some of the best people I know are recovering addicts, yes they have made some bad choices and so have I, and probably every one of us has.

That addict that finds recovery may be someone who is there to help that person you love that you find out has a problem, or they could be that person that rushes out into traffic to grab your child because they are so passionate about making a difference with their life because of their past. Maybe they are the one who takes a meeting into a facility that helps someone else find recovery.

I don't know how long until the stigma is gone, or if it ever will be. Before you judge that person, recognize that they are just sick, maybe they're hurting and aren't letting anyone see, and sometimes a non-judgmental hand or a loving comment is all someone needs. Or at least don't say anything that is mean or hurtful. You never know what someone is going through, or who they may become, or the things they could accomplish in life. Some of the most successful, loving, caring people in history have a dark past if you look into it. That past made them into the person that you respect or love. Sometimes we go through those things, to become that person we're supposed to be.

**Adam W.**



## Feelings and Emotions

Feelings and emotions are not who I am; they do not define me. They only let me know what I'm going through and what actions I need to take.

**Samuel B.**

## Freedom

The worst prison I have ever been trapped in is in my own mind. The only way I was able to escape is someone had to reach out and grab me. Once I was free, I felt lost. I felt I had no sense and purpose. It was then, the same person that freed me, showed me a way, with no chains or bars. It was a new life that had purpose and made sense, and for once in my life, my mind was at peace.

**Samuel B.**



# ANNIVERSARIES

## January

Craig G., We Do Recover, January 1st, 30 yrs  
Chris D., New Attitudes, January 1st, 8 yrs  
Jenn M., HOW Group, January 4th, 3 yrs  
Roger A., January 1st, 5 yrs  
Jamie P., Soul Sistas, January 2nd, 11 yrs  
Tony B., Change Starts Here, January 5th, 3 yrs  
Victoria L., Women in Recovery, January 5th, 18 months  
Maura C., Soul Sistas, January 7th, 1 yr  
Erin C., It Works, January 8th, 10 yrs  
Don N., HOW Group, January 10th, 4 yrs  
Britney O., 11th step Beach Meeting, 1 yr  
Ron E., Resurrender, January 13th, 1 yr  
Juan B., Basic Meeting, January 15th, 28 yrs  
Jane, Life's a Beach, January 15th, 12 yrs  
Betsey B., Noon Group, January 15th, 3 yrs  
Rob M., Clean Harbor, January 15th, 2 yrs  
Allie R., Ladies to the Core, January 15th, 1 yr  
Christine K., Women in Recovery, January 16th, 1 yr  
Kelly C., 11th Step Beach Meeting, January 18th, 14 yrs  
Kimberly W., Clean Harbor, January 18th, 4 yrs  
Brad F., Resurrender, January 19th, 1 yr  
Patrick S., Do You Really Want to Know, January 25th, 6 yrs  
Eric B., Picnics in Recovery, January 25th, 1 yr  
Julie S., Women & Recovery, January 26th, 14 yrs  
William G., Saturday Night Live, January 27th, 4 yrs  
Kim R., Listen to Learn, January 30th, 2 yrs

## February

Sheryl D., February 1st, 21 yrs  
Anthony Z., Serenity in Addiction, February 3rd, 1 yr  
Joanne L., Basic Meeting, February 4th, 33 yrs  
Karissa T., Women in Recovery, February 4th, 2 yrs  
Matthew W., First Things First, February 6th, 18 months  
Shannon M., It Works, February 11th, 1 yr  
Amp M., It Works, February 12th, 6 yrs  
Hailey B., Trust the Process, February 15th, 7 yrs  
Natalie S., Just for Today, February 16th, 1 yr  
Leighton N., Serenity in Addiction, February 17th, 2 yrs  
Trish T., Basic Meeting, February 26th, 9 yrs

## March

Brittney G., Trust the Process, March 5th, 8 yrs  
Gary F., DOA, March 7th, 19 yrs  
John R., Trust the Process, March 7th, 1 yr  
Melissa H., Spiritual Solutions, March 8th, 3 yrs  
Lexi B., Change Starts Here, March 9th, 5 yrs  
Shelia C., Women on Wednesday, March 12th, 13 yrs  
Shauna S., Do You Really Want to Know, March 16th, 4 yrs  
Jeannie K., It Works, March 17th, 30 years  
Tim B., Come As You Are, March 18th, 7 yrs  
Joe S., Spiritual Principles, March 25th, 8 yrs  
Elizabeth C., March 27th, 1 yr



LOL

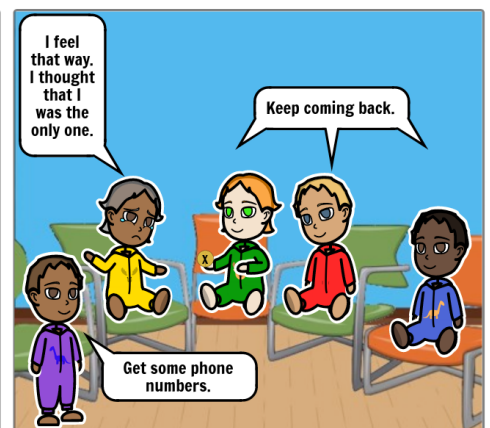
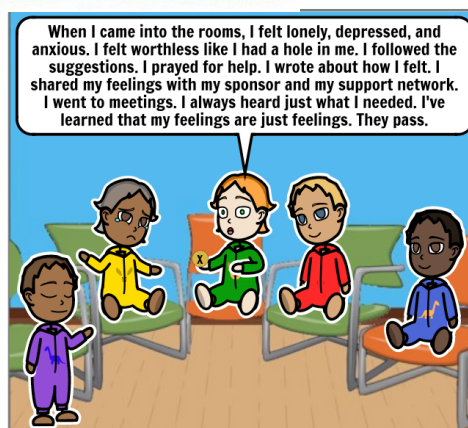
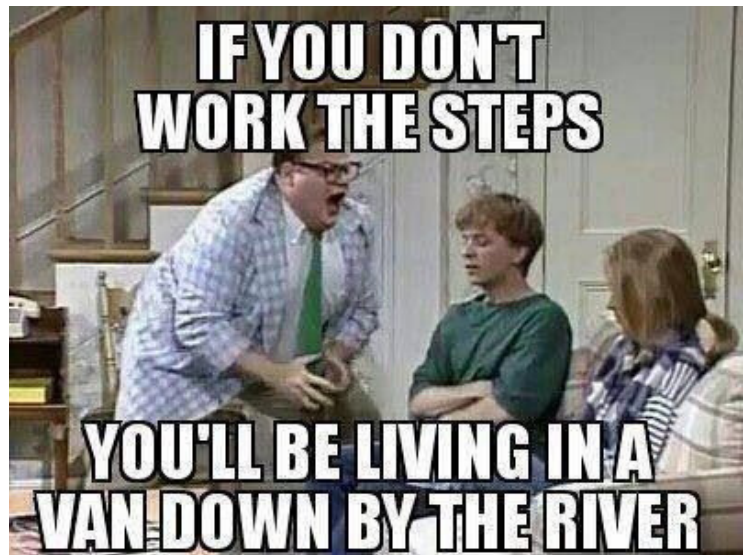


Newcomer: how is going to 90 meetings in 90 days going to help me recover?

Meeting Maker Marty:



Me doing my 5th step sex inventory





## **Me**

My name is Leighton and I am an addict- I confused being spiritually sound with a haughty spirit. I professed humility when pride was apparent. I craved stability but my drug of choice was always chaos. I still appear joyful and carefree even when I'm dead inside.

I say I don't care about anything when really I care about everything. I Love insurmountably but sometimes I give it away below market value. I philosophize because I have to tell myself these things.

I believe and have faith that my higher power can and will restore my sanity but I ain't really sure I grasp the concept of "sanity". I have so much I want to/can do for a living that I don't know where to begin, so much so that I end up settling just to get by.

I hear but I don't always listen. I talk but don't always speak. I cry when I'm overwhelmed with happiness but I don't shed a single tear when I'm sad.

I don't want the things I want and I definitely don't want the things that you have. I don't want to be content because I am. I don't want to define things but I still do.

I eat fried gator nuggets with hot sauce even though I have a gringo gut™. I tell jokes because I'm a serious person. My toughness is my weakness. I have friends but I ain't friendly. If I know it's futile I'll still try.

I came here to stay clean I stayed so I could recover. I inadvertently sabotage myself because success and happiness eluded me for so long that I don't know if I want/deserve it. I don't give up. I don't get high anymore. I owe the still sick and suffering addict and the newcomer experience strength and hope like it was my atonement for my dereliction and degradation. I've lost the desire to use because I've found a new way to live. I continue to take personal inventory so I don't have to use over the duality that plagues me. Just because I don't get high anymore don't mean I'm cured, more will always be revealed. Today I embrace reality.

**Leighton**

## **Surrender**

When I first came in the rooms, I had to surrender to the drugs first and foremost. I had to accept the fact that I cannot use successfully. Despite fourteen years of using every day, I was still up in the air about if I was an addict or not. That's how my mind worked at the time, but I kept coming back, because you guys told me to and chances are, if I'm sitting in a meeting in Narcotics Anonymous, I'm probably an addict.

First step, accept that my life is out of control and surrender. Surrender to me is submission, an act of giving up and letting go. For so long, the word surrender meant that I was weak or lesser than. I thought I could control the drug use and it was never going to get the best of me. I have to surrender every day, not only to the drugs but other things in life as well...the program, work, people, and my higher power. The word surrender takes on a whole new meaning for me today as I progress in life. Today, I surrender to my higher power and stay in God's will, that is a must for me; as long as I do that, no matter what happens in life, everything works out, only because I stay in Gods will. What I gain in Gods will, I keep only through staying in Gods will. Anything I gain outside of Gods will, I have to stay out of Gods will to keep it. Today, I stay in Gods will. The freedom of active addiction and gifts I get through surrendering every day is much better than the things I would receive if I stay in my own will.

**Bobby H.**

# Grateful For....

I am grateful that even though my son has a diagnosis of Cerebral Palsy, it doesn't stop him from being the sun that shines the galaxy!

**Kaity P.**

I'm grateful for 18 months and all the experiences I have lived in this time, good or bad. My faith in my HP is renewed and because of the fellowship, I no longer feel alone.

**Maria E.**

I'm grateful for second chances at life. I'm grateful for the miracles we all get to see every day as we grow and change together. The laughter, cries, the wins and losses, we all experience one day at a time. I'm grateful for the memories and the strength we have to build a better future no matter what our past. I'm grateful that I never have to be alone again.

**Karly W.**

Grateful that, no matter what, I don't have to use. I can cope and feel my feelings. I can use my network and help other addicts find their way.

**Maura C.**

Grateful I have a sponsor who has a sponsor, who has a sponsor, who has a sponsor and we all work the steps.

**Shawn C.**

I'm grateful for the ability to actually participate in life, to give and receive love, and continue to grow!

**Sheryl D.**

Grateful my life is so full because of recovery. My quality problems today are balancing it all.

**Julie S.**

The magic of recovery.

**Jackie O.**

Grateful that I can show up for my loved ones today and not expect anything in return. After all the years I put them through hell, it is nice to do something that brings them joy.

**Megan G.**

Grateful for the relationship I've built with people who truly love me for me...good and bad.

**Anthony B.**

Grateful to be clean during the holidays.

**Amber H.**

Everything. Everyone. Every single Situation and of course God!

**Christine K.**

*Thank You!*



### **Your Beat**

Will you ease up one bar,  
Or jump off the page?  
Slow down when you're calm,  
Or speed up with rage?  
Will your next note be flat,  
Or grow sharper with age?  
Will you play your own tune,  
Or listen backstage?  
Only you can gauge...

Do you write your own music as you go along?  
Or do you read from a book and live like a sing-a-long?  
Are you writing in pencil, erasing the whole song?  
Or do you dare use a pen, and learn from what's

gone wrong?  
Either way you must stay strong...

Do you think you can handle  
this time of change?  
The silence between notes  
may sound a little strange.  
Do you think you can handle  
this change of time?  
Just dance a little faster,  
while writing a smoother rhyme.

In the end... Dance to the boogie  
and let your song shine!

**Nicole C.**





## What Can an Atheist use as a higher power in Narcotics Anonymous?

The NA Fellowship is a program based on the spiritual principles found within the 12 steps. A few of those spiritual principles are honesty, courage, and service. There is no requirement to be of any specific faith, or of any faith at all. Below is a paragraph from the NA Step Working Guide in Step 2

“Some of us resisted this step because we thought it required us to be religious. Nothing could be further from the truth. There is nothing, absolutely nothing, in the NA program that requires a member to be religious. The idea that “anyone may join us, regardless of.... religion or lack of religion” is fiercely defended by our fellowship. Our members strive to be inclusive in this regard and do not tolerate anything that compromises the unconditional right of all addicts to develop their own individual understanding of a Power greater than themselves. This is a spiritual, not religious program.”

The text goes on to provide examples of a higher power that do not include any of the gods worshiped around the world.

“The beauty of the Second Step is revealed when we begin to think about what our Higher Power can be. We are encouraged to choose a Power that is loving, caring, and most importantly, able to restore us to sanity. The Second Step does not say “We came to believe in a Power greater than ourselves”. It says “We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity”. The emphasis is not on who or what this Power is, but on what this Power can do for us. The group itself certainly qualifies as a Power greater than ourselves. So do the spiritual principles contained in the 12 steps. And of course, so does the understanding any one of our individual members has of a Higher Power.”

I am an atheist who has found great success in staying clean using the NA 12 Step Fellowship.

For my higher power, I use the NA literature, the principles found in the 12 steps, the group itself, or a higher level of consciousness (greater than my base level thinking; ego=me / no ego=we) found through meditation.

These might be unique to me. It doesn't matter. It isn't a competition to see who has the best higher power.

Whatever restores us to sanity is all we need!

Regarding a higher power in the NA Fellowship, refer to what the literature says instead of entertaining opinions of members who haven't read it.

NA literature is the only truth in the program, and even that gets revised from time to time.

**Dani C.**



# ACTIVITIES

## Recovery Coast 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Unity Day



\*\*\*THE PURPOSE OF THIS EVENT IS TO PROMOTE  
UNITY BETWEEN OUR AREA AND SURROUNDING  
AREAS THROUGH FUN AND FELLOWSHIP\*\*\*

### When:

February 8, 2020  
10am - 10pm

### Where:

Trinity Presbyterian Church  
4651 Little Rd  
New Port Richey, FL 34655

\*\*We Are Not Affiliated with this Facility\*\*

### FEATURING:

- Workshops • Activities
- Main Speaker • Live Concert
- Fun-Food-Fellowship • F&I Jail
- Clean Time Countdown • Sub Committee  
Risks

### ITEMS FOR SALE:

- Raffle Tickets • Bundle Packs
- Banner • Food
- Unity day 2020 Merchandise

## \$5 NO ADDICT TURNED AWAY

\*\*LUNCH & DINNER NOT INCLUDED\*\*

### SCHEDULE:

10am-11am:

∞ Registration & Fellowship

11am-12pm:

∞ SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES: A New  
Way to Live

12pm-1pm:

∞ Lunch

1pm-2pm:

∞ INFINITE POSSIBILITIES: Beyond  
Our Wildest Dreams

2pm-3pm:

∞ Activity

3pm-4pm:

∞ HOPE SHOT: Our Reason

4pm-5pm:

∞ Activity

5pm-6pm:

∞ SPONSORSHIP: A Two Way  
Street

6pm-7:30pm:

∞ Dinner

7pm-7:30pm:

∞ Meditation

7:30pm-8pm:

∞ Auction/Raffle

8pm-9pm:

∞ MAIN SPEAKER:

9pm-9:30pm:

∞ CLEAN TIME COUNTDOWN

9:30pm-Close:

∞ LIVE Concert: PARADOX



## BASIC TEXT QUOTES

"Complacency is the enemy of members  
with substantial clean time.  
If we remain complacent for long,  
the recovery process ceases."

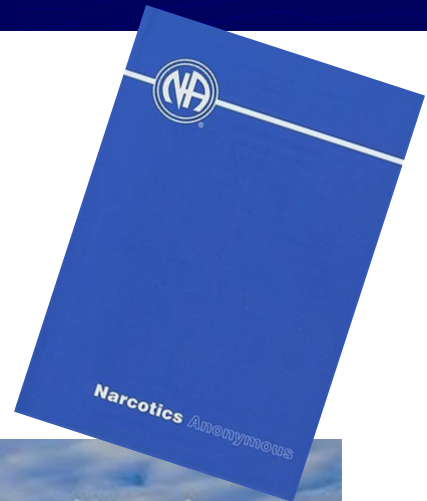
Basic Text, p. 84

### SOURCE:

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS (6TH EDITION). (2008).  
CHATSWORTH, CA: NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS WORLD SERVICES, INC.  
ISBN-13: 978-1557767349

### Basic Text

- ▶ While previous literature had been written by just a few addicts - primarily Jimmy K - the N.A. Basic Text was written as a massive collaboration between hundreds of people.
- ▶ Seven World Literature Conferences in three years open to all
- ▶ 1st edition: In 1981 a version was distributed to all of N.A. for approval, and the text was approved with a 2/3 majority. Big disagreement regarding a few key sentences - reprinted in 1983 with the passages removed.
- ▶ 2nd edition: 1983 - Restored the passages.
- ▶ 3rd edition: 1983 - Removed the controversial passages.
- ▶ 4th edition: 1987 - Professional editors and writers, more consistent in tone and style. Improperly reviewed and had many problems
- ▶ 5th edition - 1988 corrected these problems
- ▶ 6th edition - Approved at WSC 2008 : 1st 10 chapter the same, addition of personal stories with more diverse personal stories from around the world.
- ▶ Available in over 30 different languages, millions have been sold worldwide



Do we really want to be rid of our resentments,  
our anger, our fear? Many of us cling to our  
fears, doubts, self-loathing or hatred because  
there is a certain distorted security in familiar  
pain. It seems safer to embrace what we know  
than to let go of it for fear of the unknown.

(Narcotics Anonymous Book/page 33)

~Narcotics Anonymous

Every time I draw a clean breath, I'm  
like a fish out of water.

~ Narcotics Anonymous

