



## **January - March 2016 Willingness Issue**

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### **Newsletter Subcommittee**

Ramon R.  
Andrea B.  
Peter S.

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

*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 herein expresses the views and knowledge of its contributors, not NA as a whole. Please read this publication with that in mind.*



## **Why I Stay Clean**

I know what it felt like to walk into my first NA meeting. I was feeling hopeless. I was scared and frightened. I also was curious about this thing called Narcotics Anonymous. I felt beyond help. I immediately looked around the room to see if there were any addicts that used like me. I saw one old man that I knew was a dope fiend. He gave me a shot of hope by his just being there. They did the readings. I thought how can these people can help

me. I had real problems. Legal, emotional, and physical problems. Serious problems. As I listened, I heard some interesting things. It was a strange sensation. The literature made a lot of a sense. I identified I knew I was an addict. I just had never been to a place that understood me. I did not understand spirit values. I thought I needed to be punished. There was not any help for me. I related to jails, institutions and death. I knew reading literature was not going to keep me from using. I was staying clean for the fear of going to prison. I did find it interesting how people shared their feelings. I heard meeting makers make it. A meeting a day for the first 90 days. I was told I had connections to use, so get phone numbers of people staying clean, dial them don't file them. I was told to stay away from the old playmates, playthings, and playgrounds. many things were shared at this meeting. I did not remember all of them. Get a home group, get a sponsor and do not use no matter what. I felt better when the meeting was over. I heard enough to keep coming back.

*Jimmy S.*



*"If faith without works is dead, willingness without action is fantasy." ~Anonymous*

## Willingness was not in my vocabulary

As I entry my journal of recovery. Willingness was not in my vocabulary. I had no drive of any will power, but to manipulate, take advance, rob and steal for the next one. As I started to attend the rooms of Narcotic Anonymous and hearing other's journal through the room. And the guidance of the old times. Willingness become a thought. Resistant was more a second natural impulse I retreated too my comfort zone. I ask question and one of the old times to me to look up the definition of willingness. Willingness can be defined as being eagerly compliant. It means doing something out of choice and not because of coercion. When people become willing to do something, it means their minds become more open and receptive.

They may consider doing things that in the past may have appeared objectionable. Willingness means embracing change rather than fighting it. If I do not have a strong desire for recovery, it will be hard for them to maintain it. It is possible for the individual to get sober to please other people, but such recoveries tend to be short-lived. This is because staying away from alcohol and drugs is hard if people are not fully willing to do all that it takes. In order to build a successful life away from alcohol and drugs, the individual needs to be prepared to put in a great deal of effort. Those who lack willingness will not be able to summon the necessary determination.

Once I have come to terms with my Rock bottom is sometimes described as reaching a point where the individual is, sick and tired of feeling sick and tired. There is no reason for why people need to lose everything in order to hit their rock bottom. They just need to reach a point where they have had enough. Some individuals will hit their rock bottom without losing very much at all. It is like going down in an elevator. It is up to the passenger to decide where they want to get off. There is absolutely no benefit from staying in the lift all the way to the bottom, because this means death.

Once the individual has fully decided that they have had enough of addiction they will have be willing to do what it takes to escape. This willingness is a force that provides them with the energy to take the correct steps to end the addiction. It means that they will be ready to make use of

available resources such as rehab, therapists or addiction fellowships.

In the meeting the member needs to be willing to go to any lengths to stay clean. It is not possible for the individual to complete the 12 steps unless they have a high degree of willingness. This is because it involves taking action that the addicted mind would rebel against. The member never graduates from these 12 Step programs, so this willingness will need to be something they are able to maintain indefinitely.

*Allen R.*

***Willingness is open-mindedness in action. It is the way we feel before we take actions based on faith. As we personally become able to let go of defects through willingness, we are able to put spiritual integrity ahead of our desire for instant gratification. When we pray for the willingness to do whatever it takes to recover, we know that we never have to use again no matter what!***

## **Tradition 1: “Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA Unity.”**

When I was in the midst of active drug use the only welfare that I was concerned about was my own. In Narcotics Anonymous we are asked to set our personal differences aside and to think of ourselves less. The 12 steps take us on a journey to eradicate the total self centeredness on which the disease of addiction feeds. The only way to de-fuel the disease of addiction is to work the 12 steps, diminish self centeredness, and carry the message. We do this by considering the needs of the group and setting those needs ahead of our personal desires. This process is so vital that our clean date is contingent upon our willingness to put the needs of the group ahead of the needs or desires of the individual. Because my clean date is contingent upon my willingness and ability to be unified with the group it is of the utmost importance that I practice the principals of patience, understanding, empathy, compassion, and forgiveness. The basic text says that “the group is the most powerful vehicle for carrying the message” and “the ultimate weapon for recovery is the recovering addict.” If my personal recovery depends on NA unity then it is vital that I have the ultimate weapon to fight for freedom and the only way I can have the ultimate weapon is by putting our common welfare ahead of my own.

- *Brian M.*  
Philadelphia

### **Willingness**

That I was asked to write on willingness is not lost on me.

I have been battling with being willing to work on certain areas of my life. It seems funny that even though I know that when I surrender my life gets better, I still fight to hold on to my will. When I first came into NA I was willing to do whatever was necessary to stop using. The longer I stay clean the more I see how many areas of my life my disease has affected.

While it will always be about not picking up drugs, I see now that I have more willingness to work on myself. This is a product of my actively working the steps and talking with my support group. Recently, I have made many positive changes in my life. I have become involved with service work as well as working on myself on being less shy and allowing people to see the real me.

I have struggled with this for some time and working on me is my way of practicing willingness in my life. Public speaking is scary to me but I am trying to work past my fears. I like to be seen but not necessarily heard. One of the many gifts I have received from Narcotics Anonymous is to have found my voice. I am no longer afraid to let people know what I am going through, and hopefully able to help someone else with my Experience, Strength and Hope.

*Sharon L*



# Recovery is Life

Recently, a sponsee said to me, "I wish I had the willingness to stop this behavior". This led me ponder on the matter of willingness. Do I really need the willingness to stop a specific behavior? I don't think so. All I need is the willingness to be willing to be honest and open-minded. With the three indispensable principles of the N.A. program – the H.O.W - I have a chance to recover in all areas.

In the beginning, I heard people speak of gratitude – of being grateful that they had not died in active addiction. I secretly thought the sentiment was dramatic. My illusion of control was so great that I thought drugs could not kill me. I had no experience with losing friends when I was using, because I didn't have any.

My life in recovery has changed what I believe, both about the disease of addiction, and the way I view willingness. There is a spot of sadness now even on a sunny day. The stark truth has been shown to me: Addiction kills. It kills our friends, it kills our parents, and it kills us.

Have you heard of the no matter what club? The meaning of this has changed for me, too. I must not use - no matter what - but also, I must be honest, open-minded, and willing – no

matter what. I must be willing to tell the truth, no matter what. No matter how impossible it seems, I must be willing to go through the pain (not around it, not under it, not over it) - no matter what. I must make choices based in these three indispensable principles - no matter what.

If I do not choose these principles, I might die.

It is that dire. It IS that dramatic.

I hope you all hold me to this, for I cannot do it alone. Do not tell me that I can do whatever I choose, as long as I accept the consequences. I am not in a position to accept the consequences. The consequences may be dire. The consequences may kill me or those I love. I do not have a right to choose those consequences.

Show me the way by telling the truth, by listening to my perspective and then showing me yours. May we bow our heads together in service, addicts working together, choosing life. Recovery is life.

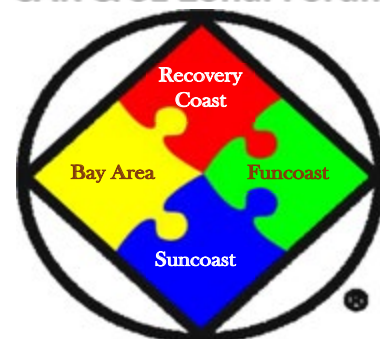
Honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness is H.O.W. we make this choice -this choice to live -and we do it together.

*Leelah D.*

**There are currently  
149 meetings and  
69 Groups in the  
Bay Area!**

**TOGETHER WE CAN  
DO SO MUCH MORE.**

**Spirit of Unity  
CAR & SE Zonal Forum**



**Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> 2016 10 AM – 2PM**

**Terra Nova Club**

**7540 40<sup>th</sup> Street N., Pinellas Park, FL 33781**

**" Individually, we are  
one drop. Together,  
we are an ocean "**

**\*\* Food will be Provided**

**NA is Not Affiliated with this Facility**



# POETRY CORNER

## WILLINGNESS

Letting go of self I move toward the light,  
Allowing in a wave of peace and giving up the fight.  
I didn't know how truly sick I was  
Till I surrendered to a spirit watching from above  
In the midst of chaos, I felt serene  
I learned what it meant to live my life clean  
Willingness to try this one day at a time  
Awakening to a life that could only be mine  
So I cleaned up the wreckage and took a deep breath  
I took some suggestions and avoided certain death  
Through the ups and downs of life and circumstance  
I learned to stand tall and move with life's dance  
I watch those who still suffer and it tears me apart  
This disease knows no mercy and it breaks my weary heart  
A chance to live free, in bondage no more  
I will never take for granted walking through that first door  
I live and let live, with my hand always there  
To help the next person and show them I care  
From a spark my recovery has become a large smolder  
I am grateful for the chance to turn one year older  
From willingness to desire and then onto passion  
I live this life to the fullest and in true recovery fashion  
Together we do what no man can alone  
Breathe hope into spirits adrift and find a place called home.

*Brenda M.*



## I am Here But I am Not

I am here but I am not  
The sun is out yet it feels so dark  
You are here and then your not  
The music plays and then it stops  
You speak to me then your not  
Our hearts beat then they stop  
We are here but we are not  
The sky is clear so why do I feel the drops  
Because I am here and you are not.

*Jennifer S.*



Artwork by Leah J.

# HOROSCOPES

Aries- (March 21 - April 19) \*The Ram\* A Fire sign, ruled by Mars...It doesn't matter if you focus on the clouds, the sun, the sky, the rain, the trees, or the bees. Just focus on something outside of yourself. When you see the beauty of life, gratitude will come. Prayer and meditation will help with this.

Taurus- (April 20 - May 20) \*The Bull\* An Earth sign, ruled by Venus...Ok, so maybe you didn't get everything that you wanted for Christmas, but you didn't return the gifts you bought for other people before Christmas got here either, and for that, you can be grateful. Keep doing good things, and good things will happen. Prayer and meditation will help with this.

Gemini- (May 21 - June 20) \*The Twins\* An Air sign, ruled by Mercury... Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to pick up the phone and call somebody that you don't normally talk to. By encouraging and talking to a newcomer, you'll help yourself. Stick to the basics and grow from there. Prayer and meditation will help with this.

Cancer- (June 21 - July 22) \*The Crab\* A Water sign, ruled by the Moon.... Next time that you find a meeting that needs a topic, why not discuss the importance of meeting etiquette? Poor behavior inside of a meeting certainly doesn't lend itself to good recovery outside of a meeting. Prayer and meditation will help with this.

Leo- (July 23 - August 22) \*The Lion\* A Fire sign, ruled by the Sun... You can't pour from an empty cup, so take care of yourself first. However, remember that full cups don't have room for new blessings to pour in, so be sure to give it away to keep getting your free refills. Prayer and meditation will help with this.

Virgo- (August 23 - Sept. 22) \*The Maiden\* An Earth sign, ruled by Mercury... Recovery can be fun and exciting as well as monotonous and mundane, but relapse is always worse than staying clean. Remember to mix it up, and keep moving forward. Prayer and meditation will help with this.

Libra- (Sept. 24- Oct. 22) \*The Scales\* An Air sign, ruled by Venus... Nobody gets through life without scars and help. Acknowledge the scars, accept the help, and go to your home group. You do have a home group, don't you? .Prayer and meditation will help with this.

Scorpio- (October 23 - Nov. 21) \*The Scorpion\* A Water sign, ruled by Pluto... Be careful that when you work a step, you don't focus more on the next step than continuing to apply what you learned in the previous steps each day. Recovery is cumulative, not sequential. Prayer and meditation will help with this.

Sagittarius- (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21) \*The Centaur\* A Fire sign, ruled by Jupiter... Doing the right thing isn't always easy, but doing it anyway is a great way to build integrity and self esteem. Prayer and meditation will help with this.

Capricorn- (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19) \*The Mountain Goat\* An Earth sign, ruled by Saturn...People actually enjoy your company today because they legitimately like you. Think about that for a minute, people like being around you. Awesome, isn't it? Want more? Prayer and meditation will help with this.

# Looking for Something to Do?

**A New Beginning on the Southside  
presents a Holiday Party**  
January 9 - 7pm-10:30pm  
METRO WELLNESS CENTER  
3251 3RD AVE NORTH - ST PETERSBURG

**CAR & SE Zonal Forum  
In the Spirit of Unity  
4 Areas come together**  
January 23  
10:00 am - 2:00 pm  
7550 40th Street North - Pinellas Park

**Unity Day- Recovery Coast**  
January 30  
Unity Church, 5844 Pine Hill Road  
Port Richey, FL

**Relax & Recover 10th Annual  
Good Day Sunshine Picnic**  
March 19  
9:30 am - 4:00 pm-  
4630 East Bay Drive - Clearwater

## **BAY AREA NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT!**

**Activities Needs your input and support!**  
1st & 3rd Wed at 6:30pm The Place

**Helpline needs members to man the phones!**  
10am First Sunday at The Place

**H&I Hospital & Institution**  
Needs members to go to jail!  
Plus you get to leave!  
8:30am 1st Sunday of the month at The Place

**Newsletter could use you too**  
write submissions to [lit@bascna.org](mailto:lit@bascna.org)

**P.R. Public Relations**  
Needs You! For many different tasks  
First Wed of the month at Terra Nova 8pm

*All meeting times subject to change and "  
can be found in your local meeting list.*

# 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 there helpline # or check there website to find meetings.*



## **Note from the Newsletter Subcommittee:**

Instead of throwing away old newsletters, please consider recycling them... And we don't just mean in an eco-friendly way! Try giving your group's old newsletters to an H&I panel member, and ask them to bring the newsletters to the institution they visit so that the addicts there can read our newsletter, too. If you do not know of an H&I panel member, bring them to the Area meeting and give them back to the H&I Chair Leelah.

# Celebrate Recovery

## ***“My Gratitude Speaks.... When I Care And When I Share With Others The NA Way”***

Relax & Recover	Lina T.	12/13/14	1 year
New Attitudes	Bobby C.	12/16/98	17 years
Resurrender	TJ	12/20/98	17 Years
Save Your Ass	Jon M.	12/22/10	5 years
It Works	Sean B.	12/23/13	2 years
Relax & Recover	Brad H.	12/25/04	11 years
Regardless Of	Jonathan S.	12/26/13	2 years
Life's a Beach	Aralyn	12/29/92	23 years
Noon Group	Susie K.	12/30/11	4 years
Relax & Recover	Joel M.	12/30/10	5 years
New Attitudes	Harold F.	12/31/78	37 years
New Attitudes	Chris D.	01/01/12	4 years
It Works	Johnny B.	01/01/09	7 years
New Attitudes	Dave G.	01/03/15	1 year
Morning Serenity	Kevin N.	01/04/07	9 years
It Works	Mike L. (Grateful Mike)	01/05/07	
Save Your Ass	Clive M.	01/09/09	7 years
Wake Up Call	Janet D.	07/11/14	18 months
Welcome Home	Terry F.	01/14/14	2 years
Relax & Recover	Sunny	01/15/13	3 years
Relax & Recover	Jennifer S.	01/15/09	7 years
Welcome Home	Ramon R.	01/16/09	7 years
Life's a Beach	Jima	01/26/11	5 years
Welcome Home	Richard H.	01/26/07	9 years
Women & Recovery	Julie S.	01/26/06	
Life's a Beach	Denise S.	01/27/12	4 years
Welcome Home	Noel C.	01/29/14	2 years
Keys to Recovery	Leelah D.	02/02/10	6 years
Y.F.C	Dave S.	02/03/08	8 years
Welcome Home	Dan K.	02/05/88	28 years
Welcome Home	Dione C.	02/07/15	1 year
Relax & Recover	Brad S.	02/14/12	4 years
Relax & Recover	Don S.	02/25/98	17 years
We Found a Way Out	Lauren F.	04/15/15	
11th Step Beach Meeting	Fawn	05/11/93	



**e-subscribe to Just For Today on The Bay**  
[www.bascna.org](http://www.bascna.org)