

W.A.S.C.

NA TIMES

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1 JANUARY 1, 2012

Open Forum

Mission Statement for W.A.S.C. N.A. Times

In accordance with the wishes of W.A.S.C. and the groups it represents and following the Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous and the guidelines set forth in the Handbook for Narcotics Anonymous Newsletters, the Literature Committee of Western Area has taken on the task of providing the area with a quarterly newsletter. Our mission is to provide an avenue of communication, discussion and expression for members and groups of N.A. so as to help build unity in our area.

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PERSONAL STORIES

UPCOMING
EVENTS

HUMOR

FOOD FOR
THOUGHT

PUZZLES

AND MUCH MORE



As a way to show how we can use the Steps and Traditions in all we do, these next four issues the newsletter is going to present one couple's interpretation and adaptation of the 12 Traditions in their marriage, starting with the first three Traditions....

The 12 Traditions of a Lasting Loving Spiritual Relationship.

1. Our common welfare as husband and wife should come first; we are equally responsible for our well being and in treating each other with kindness and respect and we support each other in our common welfare.

Our lasting union depends on the unity of our relationship and requires personal commitment and responsible actions. We support each other thru surrender, acceptance, commitment, selflessness, love, and anonymity.

2. For the purpose of our relationship there is an ultimate authority, as they may express themselves in our family.

We surrender our ultimate authority when we place the needs of our family ahead of our own desires and we prac-

tice faith in the work we see done by our Higher Powers. With humility we are able to assess our strengths and weaknesses by practicing humility in our efforts to serve one another. We make room for open-mindedness. Then with integrity we inspire trust in one another. This will keep us aware of our behaviors and their effects on ourselves and others.

3. The only requirement for our relationship is a desire to be a part of bond that communicates and is free of judgments.

We must be willing to practice tolerance with each other. Thru compassion we learn to support each other in any difficulties that we may experience. We should also have an attitude of loving acceptance toward each other regardless of any problems we may experience. We must practice humility and remember that neither one of us is the other's God. We need each other's faith and encouragement not criticism or rejection. Thru autonomy in our relationship, we welcome each other as equals. The practice of autonomy ensures the integrity of our marriage.

Goodwill and Forgiveness

This morning as I awoke and was lying in bed, it hit me. "Goodwill!" Followed by a softer voice "and forgiveness." The last couple of months I had been struggling with the aftermath of a long-term relationship gone awry. Toward the end, silence and indifference became my weapon of choice, disguised as love from a distance. Then a friend reminded me that the worst thing in life is not necessarily being unloved, but being forgotten. I snapped and realized that I was letting the character defect of indifference dictate my actions.

Indifference, another form of self-centeredness. I was raised in that environment and learned it well. It was and still can be my wall of defense with the outside world. The tools of steps, meetings and sponsorship help me keep that wall broken down. Vigilance on my part is just as important when it comes to the disease of addiction. My dis-

ease will sneak up on me with whatever tool out of the defects toolbox it can use. So I must always be on the lookout for rationalization and justification. Doesn't matter how much clean time I have. I've learned that clean time does not equal recovery.

So, I became indifferent to this particular situation in my life. As a result this relationship fell apart. Days turned into weeks and weeks into months. Eventually my anger and disappointment became less important than the time invested in this friendship. I found it harder to work with others as well, especially when working or sharing on the 8th and 9th step.

"As we realize our need to be forgiven, we tend to be more forgiving". There were things that the other person did that I felt wronged or disappointed about. But that's for them to take care of. I needed to clean my side of the street. We work the steps for our benefit. Eventu-

ally I called. We talked and I made my amends. Will they ever make theirs, doesn't matter, not my business. I feel better knowing that I did the next right thing.

I've learned over the years that forgiveness is a key to long lasting recovery. And without goodwill to lay the foundation almost impossible to practice. Goodwill allows me to be kind and benevolent to all in and out of the fellowship whether I like them or not. The base of our fellowship's service symbol, reminds me that it is necessary in order for the fellowship to continue its primary

TRUTH OR MYTH?

There are several sayings in the program that are not in the literature. One is "No addict will be turned away." I will try to explain this in relationship to what I have experienced in the program these last 18 years.

It took me 9 years to get my first year. I was a revolving door. 1 2 3 out. They kept telling me to keep coming back and now I have almost ten years. I have seen a lot of instances where addicts have been turned away and for good reasons.

I have seen violent disruptions in meetings, fist-fights, chairs being thrown and hot coffee being thrown on innocent bystanders. Some Groups in their opening format include a sentence concerning members with weapons, drugs or paraphernalia. These people are asked to leave, dispose of them and quickly return. I have been in meetings where the police were our only salvation in cases of extreme violent behavior, and no other approaches have been successful. In other cases, old timers were able to handle the situations. I will give two examples that I have witnessed that seem to work very well and are non-violent solutions.

One time, an addict came to our meeting and was asking a lot of questions. We saw that he had a desire of some magnitude even though he was really drunk. Perhaps he needed a meeting and some fellowship or why else would he be there.

Each time some one spoke, he would interrupt them halfway with, "Why?" or "What does that mean?" He was fairly insistent, confused and somewhat belligerent when we just ignored his outbursts. Finally, two old-timers got up from their chairs and approached this guy saying politely, "Would you like to step outside and we

purpose. Without goodwill carrying a message is impossible. So what's good for the whole must be good for the individual.

I woke up this morning knowing that even though all may not be right with all my relationships, as long as I continue to practice unconditional love, forgiveness and goodwill to all I meet today there will be less need to "take care of my side of the street."

Wil G, Norman, OK

will gladly listen to you." "Step outside!" he shouted as he stood up and assumed the boxer's pose.

"No, we really mean we will listen to your questions and try to give you some answers, but we need to not interrupt these other nice folks. We will listen to any thing you want to talk about." The three went outside and the addict later said that they were the first people who really cared enough about him to listen to his troubles.

Another time during a business meeting, things got real heavy. We were discussing a fist fight that had broken out between two members during a regular meeting. Both combatants were telling their sides. Emotions were flaring and things were going to get ugly. "Let's take just a moment and get in touch with our Higher Power," someone said. There was just a moment of silence then someone started out with, "God, grant me the serenity..." It just took a second or two but everyone calmed down and the meeting continued.

Now I would like to address the no addict will be turned away in relation to conventions. We don't provide the addict with a hotel room; we turn them away from buying a hoodie if they don't have any money. They don't get in to the banquet for free unless someone ponies up with their fare. They don't get taxi fares paid by the committee nor do they get a meal in the hotel restaurant. They do get access to all meetings and workshops, however. If an individual does not have the funds to cover registration, some conventions do waive this amount through the performance of service work. Most registration forms have "Newcomer Donation", a place to add extra monies to help sponsor the newcomer. Most conventions will allow any in for free if they are at least willing to perform service work. Some sponsors, out of the kindness of their hearts, may help their less fortunate sponsorees with fi-

nances enabling them to attend a convention. Recovery in NA is free but the rent is not. Conventions cost a great deal of money, and attendance is not required or mandatory. It is privilege to attend, not a birthright. Same with the dance or the comedy show that many conventions provide. Most conventions will try to keep entrance or door prices at the very minimum as suggested in the convention handbook, but the handbook tells us we have to pay the bills for the convention.

I have seen many a 'bum rush' at the door of dances at our convention. Most group dances will have a cover or door charge and I have seen groups clear out the room after meetings then re-admit everyone to get the

cover charge. Once again, allowances are made for those who have no money. I have seen members with a full pack of cigarettes and a seven-dollar Starbucks say they do not have any money. They don't even offer service work but just say, "No addict will be turned away." This is addict behavior.

In IP No. 24 "Money Matters Self-Support in NA", it says: "*There is a spiritual satisfaction in freely giving to support the fellowship that saved our lives. We give what we can, knowing that our contributions become part of a worldwide effort to share recovery.*"

Chris C., Norman, OK

From around the country

The Season of Humility

Here we are again with the cold weather, and the forever surreal revolving doors of NA recovery. How my heart goes out to those who chose to continue their research and development (R&D) back out there using. This time of year meeting attendance seems to go up a little as people realize they are addicts and they need to be at meetings. Just in the past month, I have had a number of former NA members (and former sponsees) return to the rooms. As always, I pray that they stay this time, for good, and do not return to living the lie.

I am truly grateful for the freedom from active addiction and the liberty that comes from surrendering to this way of life, and giving back what has been freely given to me, I continue in the growth process of selflessness. Our literature tells us that self centeredness is at the core of our disease. In reality, it is the pinnacle of all humankind shortcomings – the ugliest of them all, and is the one that pulls us further away from the God of our understanding. Practicing humility on a continual basis is the most effective way for me to achieve this goal. Give of your time and talents – to serve NA and other good causes, without expecting anything in return. Do something nice for someone and don't tell anyone else you did so. Try that a few times and experience the freedom and make it a part of your arsenal of tools to use when combating the disease of addiction.

I need to emphasize that serving NA first before other good causes is paramount. Why? Because, as our literature states, none of us came to NA brimming with love, acceptance, and among other things, honed personal skills. We need to fine tune those before we go out in the world and serve as humanitarians. For me, that process has taken many years, and it's continuing to evolve. Step work and NA service work has been the primary contributor to that success. Hopefully your path will be similar.

I often hear NA members share that the world we live in would be so much better if *everyone* practices the 12 steps and 12 traditions in their lives. I completely concur, but I also know that reality tells us that NA is a program for those who want it, not for those who need it. How best to make what we do known to all – walk the walk in your life. Practice the principles in everything you do. Look for new ways to be open minded in order to learn. In doing so, your higher power will shower you with personal growth. Often that growth will go unbeknownst to you for some time, and will be revealed when it needs to be. Always in Gods time, not ours. Be safe this season, and enjoy the company of those whom you love and whom love you.

Addict M from NH

Reprinted from Northern New England News

Living the Program

How do we find a way to balance our newfound lives, the lives we have because of our commitment to recovery in Narcotics Anonymous? That is a question many of us have asked ourselves.

We begin to build a solid foundation for our recovery by attending meetings several nights a week and working our steps, trying hard to incorporate the principles of the program into our lives. Then we attempt to add jobs, friendships, relationships, sponsees, service commitments, and lawn maintenance into our lives as well. Before too long we may find that we are upsetting our employer, or that our family feels left out. It may be that we feel as though we need more time for ourselves, that we are being pulled in too many directions at once.

What are we supposed to do, resign from our service commitments, quit going to so many meetings? Maybe we have too many sponsees. Many of us have tried to correct our out of balance lives by withdrawing from service altogether or by just going to one meeting a week, only to find that our old ways of thinking and acting creeping back into our lives again.

Asking for help from members who have been around the program for a while and seem to have the serenity and composure we are lacking can help us at times

Anonymity Revealed

“Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.” Our Twelfth tradition, on its face, makes it seem that to be an addict is like a double-edge sword. “Should I live my life beholden to principles so as to act like a robot?” If this were so, our meetings might be rather dull, unattractive events. “Should I do whatever feels best at the moment, in other words if it feels good, do it?” Unattractive chaos would likely ensue in our meetings given this hedonistic, selfish approach. Groups are guided to place principles first, while members settle into recovery with their own personality. As this happens, the collective of individuals that forms groups tend to project a personality, one that is dynamic. Anonymity is born from this group collective, and the opportunity for carrying and receiving the message to and by the addict who still suffers expands exponentially.

like this. The answers are simple, like everything in the NA program. They most likely will share with us how they slowed down, but never stopped. How they did one thing at a time, finishing each one before starting another, reminding us to take it one day at a time, so we don't get ahead of ourselves.

I have been told that anything that I put ahead of my recovery I will surely lose. I have a life that is worth living today and don't want to go back to my old ways. I hold several service positions in my area, and usually go to meetings three nights a week. I also work over forty hours a week, and have a much better relationship with my family than I did when I was using. There have been times when I felt like I might be overdoing it, but when I tried to stop doing service or going to fewer meetings, I could see the old me returning. Then, I realized that I was spending too much time on things that were unrelated to my recovery, or my job or family for that matter. I tend to get carried away with anything I do, so I'm working on that defect of character by using our Tenth Step. I'm learning to take my inventory, instead of everyone else's, after all I'm the one with the drug problem. Maybe that's why they call it living the program.

Anonymous

Reprinted from the Guardian

In Upper Cumberland

No matter how many times I attend a meeting, someone will inevitably say something that speaks to my personal recovery. Some personality will share their unique experience, strength and hope and the result is often they speak to me without them ever knowing their effect on me. Groups can also provide this same result in the manner by which they reach out to one another addicts, newcomers and old-timers alike, through this dynamic principle of anonymity. In other words, I can't but we can. How is this so? It is nigh impossible to truly describe with complete accuracy what makes any particular group attractive when it reaches out to all addicts. The most successful groups to sponsor meetings, while not all things to all addicts anywhere, come as close to this ideal as is possible. They are able to reach addicts seeking recovery who have not had any direct contact with the group. Group membership grows, no matter which group an addict may decide to join.

“Principles before personalities”... then, just what are those principles? If you’ve gotten to this point in seeking understanding of our

traditions and don’t have a handle on what exactly those principles are you probably need to start back at Step One. Powerlessness, acceptance, humility, forgiveness, and spirituality, these are just a few principles. Perhaps most important is the group’s welfare comes first, that is NA as a whole is very important, because our very lives depend on its ability to thrive and grow. This

TWENTY YEARS OF NA

Last night I went to the 20th Birthday of the oldest group in my town. I was flooded with memories as I sat there thinking of my experiences with this group. It was at this group that I had my first day clean. I came in to NA seemingly hopelessly addicted and broken. It was this group that I learned how to listen, how to share honestly, and how to trust. I would not even get a newcomer key tag at first because I was so afraid of rejection. I remember seeing someone get a 30 day key tag and thinking “I’ll never be around long enough to get one of those”. It was at this meeting that I got my first sponsor, my first basic text, my first glimpse of a loving Higher Power, went to my first NA Dance. Back then we used to hear the ABCs of recovery, ashtrays, brooms and chairs. Everyone was encouraged to help with the group.

can only be done when we follow all those principles that come before, the steps for the individual as a member of the group, and the traditions as a group member. Personalities do not become ends unto themselves. Selflessness in action for the good of the whole, the whole of NA, brings its own rewards. We actually do begin to live and enjoy life in a much more meaningful way, a direction that God wants for us to take.

Member Southern Maine

Never will I forget how the members of the group were willing to love and trust me long before I imagined possible. Even when I felt like the scum of the earth, the members of the group always treated as an equal and reminded me that I had something to offer and other newer newcomers could benefit from my experience. In some ways I feel like an old person and that the younger members of the group do not relate to me, but once again I am reminded that it is about the message, not the messenger. Sadly, the founders of this group are no longer around. Most have relapsed, some have passed away, but their efforts in 1984 to start a Narcotics Anonymous group where there was none, gave addicts that came after, a safe place to learn to live clean, the NA WAY.

Member GSA

From The NA Way, Jan 2002

Home GROUP



WORD SEARCH - MEETING ETIQUETTE

C A N D E W H I S P E R I N G S V Z W A
 O S P W L O L R T V H O N E S T Y I O N
 N T R R J P M G N I P P I D E L B U O D
 T P F E A U N E E K R X R A S E R A I J
 R E W D T Y I W S L E F E T M J H N M I
 I C E V N E E A F A G S S P O H N I S N
 B N L T M I A R G T H A P O K N O S A M
 U O C A E T J M S S M R E X I T I N G H
 T C O R O X V E W S N S C G F M S A O F
 I R M D U E T P J O U B T Y G N Y G L E
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 G E N N B G O O N C I K U S I L M I S N
 N D G E O E K C L G N I G D U J T Y N A
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 P W R S N E C O N T R E V E R S Y R U L
 M G T Q L I J U G N I L L O R T N O C O
 B N U A Y T I V I T A G E N D E M L A T
 C O I E A A E F H E L P F U L R L G S G
 A L S T E P W O R K G E L B A I L E R B

Texting
 Crosstalk
 Whispering
 Noisy
 Smoking
 Judging
 Negativity
 Tardiness
 Exiting
 Controversy
 Glorifying
 Controlling
 Longwinded
 Doubledipping
 Patience
 Prayers
 Traditions
 Concepts
 Stepwork
 Respect
 Tolerance
 Honesty
 Teamwork
 Welcoming
 Openly
 Reliable
 Contributing
 Supporting

Created By: Melissa W.

Announcements and Upcoming Events

January

20th thru 22nd- Norman Winter Convention, Norman, OK @
 the Embassy Suites. Check out WASC website for info.

February

10th –Pryor Hump Day Valentine’s Day Dance, Pryor, OK
 10th thru 12th - General Service Assembly, Glencoe, OK @
 Saints Grove Camp.

March

10th –Clean and Crazy Pig-out, Tulsa, Ok
 17th –Hardcore Unity Campout Fundraiser, Tulsa, Ok

April

19th thru the 22nd—OKRCNA XXVI OKC,OK
 The Clean and Crazy committee will meet every 3rd Sunday of
 the month @ Mazzio’s in Stroud, Ok at 1 pm.

Birthdays

Craig P 11-7-87
 Terry S 11-21-76
 Vicki H. 11-25-81
 Susan S., 12-30-81
 Wanda M 12-5-97

If you would like to have your birthday posted or a memorial
 remembered in the NA Times, drop us a line @
westernarea.natimes@gmail.com

The Western Area Service Committee meets on the first Satur-
 day of each month at. 2808 N.W.31st Street. All members of
 NA are welcome to attend this meeting.

Come and “be a part of” we need your support!

Subcommittee meetings-----10:00AM to 12:00PM
 Steering Committee-----1:15PM to 1:30PM
 General Business-----1:30PM to completion

24 Hour Helpline 866-524-7068

WASC Lit Store open hrs.

Monday 8am to 12 noon
 Thursday 3 pm to 7 pm
 Saturday 8 am to 3 pm
 Located @ 2830 NW 31st St, OKC

NA TIMES

E-mail submissions to
wasclitsub@okna.org

WE'RE ON THE WEB
WASC.NA.ORG

We, the Literature subcommittee of Western Area, would like to take this opportunity to thank the Western Area fellowship for allowing us the privilege of putting together this newsletter and allowing us to be of service.

Newsletter Disclaimer

Any and all submissions will be accepted by the newsletter subcommittee, with all submissions having an implied right to publish by the committee. The committee reserves the right to edit for content in accordance with Traditions, a clear N.A. message and grammar. Any and all submissions to newsletter not used will be saved and used in later issues. Opinions expressed in newsletter not necessarily those of N.A or W.A.S.C.

Out of the NA Way..... **Home Group**

Breakthrough

