



# SHEVANA AREA NEWS

## So..It Crossed My Mind



It crossed my mind that many of our members take great offense to people in the rooms that are not using Narcotics Anonymous language. This has always perplexed me as I am an

Alcoholic that identifies as an addict. When I first came into the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous it was because I was not getting what I needed from another fellowship so I said to myself "Why Not." My first ten or so meetings I introduced myself and said I was an alcoholic. My next ten or so meetings I introduced myself and said I was an addict/alcoholic.

Finally after quite some time I introduced myself and said I am an addict. This was one of the most freeing statements I had ever made. I had found a place I belonged. I was "at home" with other recovering addicts even though my drug of choice was alcohol. I realized at this point that we were all the same "sick people getting better." My second realization was that it was out of respect that in Narcotics Anonymous I called myself an addict and said that I was clean and if I was in another fellowship I identified as they did. My point with all of this is that sometimes when we are new we just do not know what we are. Our heads are so clouded and so many things are changing that we do not know what direction we are going. We need time to find our place. Our clarity statement says that we should "concentrate on our similarities and not our differences". When we hear a newcomer use non Narcotics Anonymous language we should practice tolerance and patience and give the newcomer time to find his or her place. When we chastise them it leaves a sour taste in their mouths for Narcotics Anonymous and in reality isn't what we want...for everyone to be recovering whether they are a drug addict or an alcoholic ?

By:  
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Please submit artwork and ideas to:  
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# The Journey Continues.....

**Chapter 2 – “Pg. 24 – “An experienced member suggested that the whole trick to living is figuring out who we are and doing it on purpose. We change in recovery, but also uncover who we are all along. We find ourselves.”**

"change in recovery" meaning a verb to take action; to make or become different; to transform.

According to a predecessor's suggestion in this chapter he simply states that we had to be doing it, which again brings me to understand that I need to be taking action continually and daily to live with a purpose. I have struggled in many different ways through good and bad circumstances over and over, not understanding or taking heed of the different emotions and behaviors, just not knowing who I was or what my purpose was. My past would constantly and sometimes does haunt me as I go through these changes; as I keep learning on how to become a responsible adult. Feeling overwhelmed with extreme amounts of loneliness, fear, anger, stress, joy, peace, and freedom. I would imprison MYSELF and not embrace the changes of the past nine out of 16 months clean. I have complained, cried, have gotten sick and allowed myself to be my failures, ultimately letting it define me.

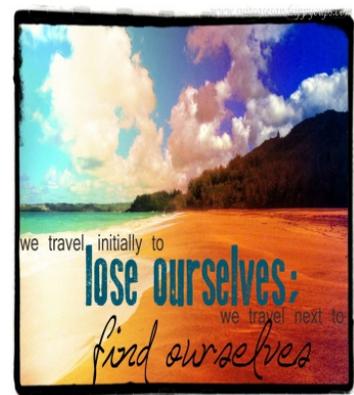
I have read this chapter four times in the past four days because of the unbelievable truth on the fact that I am not alone this program, which has and is giving me the tools to succeed and grow. God who I call my HP has given me a second chance, heck perhaps

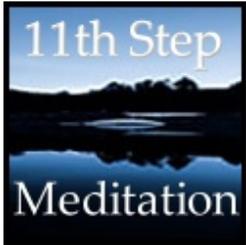
SIX chances to live (cause yes relapse has been a part of my journey in recovery, as the book states “We may even sabotage ourselves to return to familiar chaos or pain when our lives start seeming too different from what they had been”) and share these changes with the hope that one day at a time I can better myself over and over in a positive manner. Through my storms I have come out victorious because someone would share my experience at a meeting, after a meeting I would talk to a member in my network or my sponsor or I would read literature such as step work, or even in the world by watching others pattern of living to find the answers as they unraveled. I am learning daily how to be a better mom and it gets easier to fight the thoughts of feeling like a bad mom for the things I did, when I did use. Learning to let go and to find those spiritual principles of patience, courage, assertiveness, compassion, and joy gives me the freedom to accept my life as a recovering addict. I am learning about what occupation best fits me as I unveil things about me with the help of my HP, network and family. I was fired from a job last November where I had thought I would retire from so I have been working in different lines of industries. I am accepting my weaknesses and strengths and finally discovering what my career is to be. I have discovered that I hold strong old school values and beliefs. I have gone through several close deaths of friends and still remained clean. Therefore each day things become clearer that I must move and take action in order to succeed one day at a time. I am learning to accept



and endure my character defects and letting go of those old ones. In conclusion, I can go on and on of the different circumstances I have been through but the bottom line is that I allowed myself to connect to me, my higher power and those around me in and out of the program.

With total vigilance I learn a lesson of growth and on how to keep those old patterns from resurfacing daily. I am slowly finding myself and accepting that my purpose is to share my experience, strength and hope to help the next addict. My good and bad experiences will change and make a difference not only in myself but in the world. I am pursuing and have finally decided that I want a career in counseling where I can motivate others as I also learn to arrest this disease of addiction one day at a time with purpose. Like an old friend in the rooms always tells me, “Stay in the solution and not the problem.” Love, Marlene C.





"We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."

I felt some fear going into the 11th Step specifically that my eclectic approach to spirituality would have to change. The word "only" was particularly uncomfortable; my communication with my HP to that point had been in the form of informal conversation rather than ritualistic prayer and the idea that my prayer would need to change to a specific set of words bothered me. Would I need to stop saying "thank you" to my HP? That didn't fit into "knowledge of his will for me and the power to carry it out". Once again, sponsorship proved instrumental to my continued progress in recovery.

My sponsor and I worked closely together and she helped me to understand how the 11th Step could fit into my life. I came to understand that I was taking the words of the Step too literally; that it is the principle of humility applied to prayer that the Step asks us to apply, not a rigid and ritualistic approach to our relationship with our HP. I can still say "thank you" and I can still ask my HP to give me a spiritual principle when I'm lacking it because these examples reflect my trust and reliance on my HP and my willingness to strive to fulfill my HP's will for me; it is self-centered desires and immediate gratification that I try to move away from in this Step by applying the principle of humility.

Having moved through these fears and worked an 11th Step, my relationship with my HP has reached a new level of trust and security. I've also come to find that my own will is not as far from my HP's will for me as it once was. Certainly my self-centeredness and desire for immediate gratification still show up, but when I can take that moment to pause and invite my HP in, I quickly realize that it is not a "quick fix" that I want anymore, it is the long-term joy and satisfaction that only comes from relying on my HP.

My entire life I've looked for contentment in all the wrong places, never feeling like I could get enough of whatever my current fix was. I've found through the process of recovery that the feeling of contentment that I've searched so hard for only occurs when my spirit is filled, that gaping hole inside me can only be filled by my HP, and that is exactly what the 11th Step helps me to practice.

Anonymous

A photograph showing a pair of hands held in a prayer position, palms facing each other, fingers pointing upwards. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue and white.

DIFFERENT  
STYLES OF  
MEDITATION

# It's not About Me ... the 11th Tradition of NA



Tradition 11 says: Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.

But I am so grateful for my recovery; I want to shout it from the rooftops. Is that a bad thing? Well not entirely, it just depends on when, where and to whom we are shouting it! This tradition does not mean we do not ever talk about NA, it just means NA has a way to provide the outside world with information about our message of recovery that is in keeping with the essence of this tradition – that we are not promoting our program and that it is not about me, or any one individual member.

NA, our Area, Region and the World, have a subcommittee called Public Relations. It is how a community learns about NA. Public Relations can work with law enforcement; social services; education to name just a few groups. We provide information about Narcotics Anonymous to those groups, answer questions, address concerns and let them know when and where people can find our meetings. That is the goal to connect someone who needs help to the place where they may find freedom from active addiction. One of the main Public Relations tools is ever-so-attractive, yet so often taken for granted is the NA Meeting List – or a meeting list from any other area for that matter. Providing readily available information about day, time, location and format of meetings within a given area is so attractive it has probably saved many lives. Many meeting attendees come to NA via treatment, but not all. Public Relations provide current meeting lists to places where folks that may need to find a meeting are likely to be.

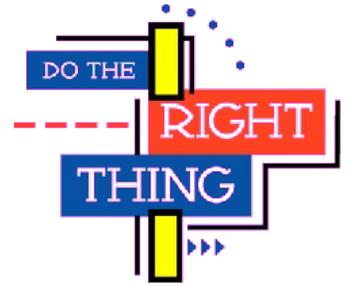


We find that when we provide this information about NA, our program can look very attractive. We tell them anyone can join us and that we do not charge anyone. We tell them we do not care about what they have used or done and that our meetings are not intended to be utilized by law enforcement or any other agency. In telling them 'Who is an Addict' we say that yes, this was how we acted but with NA we have a chance not to be that person anymore. Our message is Hope and Hope can be very attractive and does not need to be promoted nor does NA need a spokesperson. Consider the humble little box of

Wheaties who had (Wowee!!) an actual Olympic Swimmer on the front ... and then said swimmer got arrested for possession and subsequently a DUI ... Yikes. With as certain as any of us may be about the solidity and stability of our recovery if we love NA do we really want to risk the kind of harm it could cause if we decided to have a spokesperson (which includes even local radio or TV interviews)? If it's about an individual's life, they do not mention NA specifically, if it is about NA the media can contact our Public Relations Committee.

You will hear that kind of announcement at conventions. Sometimes when a town or city hosts an NA convention folks may be curious. This tradition is good for us personally as well. In our addiction we often have enlarged egos. It may even be hard to do something nice for someone without letting folks know how darn wonderful we are. So by working on the NA Public Relations Committee we get to practice doing behind the scenes work and work that is of benefit to many. This work can make us feel good too and that is ok, but is not the focus – the focus is on getting information about NA to people literally dying to hear it. Maybe this article has made Public Relations work in NA seem attractive and, if so, ask your sponsor how you might get involved. There is much that can be done.

# Not Perfect; Just Trying...



Good will is best exemplified in service; proper service is “Doing the right thing for the right reason.” Basic Text, Fifth Edition. Our Symbol.

Sometimes I just want to scream and be inappropriate, sometimes I want to be loving and tolerant, so it’s no secret I am not perfect. There is no harm in not understanding or making wrong decisions when it comes to service work, but when I’m closed minded to the voices of others when they are sharing their experience, strength and hope with me, I’m only hurting myself. Now this in no way means that I have to approve or accept the actions of others when it comes to service. I have a voice and I have been given an opportunity to share that voice regarding service work that I do in my home group, committees, sub-committees and events in my area, as well as, outside of my area. However, whatever is the consensus of the group or committee, it is my responsibility to accept that and move forward. Thanks to my Higher Power I am able to do this more often in my recovery than not!

Like many of us, I was never taught how to be tolerant or accepting of situations that baffled me, I was just told to do it or get the consequences. Perhaps from the previous sentence you can realize that I grew up in a dysfunctional family! It wasn’t until I stopped using and came around for quite a while that I realized I am simply a grain of sand in the vast ocean. I’m no better or no worse than the addicts that surround me. I learned that if I want what other members have I have to do what they do. What a rude awakening to this addict who never took suggestions from anybody. As I learned to become open-minded, many things happened for me. I became responsible and this meant that I kept my commitments and I took suggestions on “doing what we do” so that I too could “have what we have.” As it says in our traditions - “It usually isn’t until we get involved with service that someone points out that “personal recovery depends on NA unity,” and that unity depends on how well we follow our Traditions.” For me, this is a powerful sentence and it taught me that if I want good recovery then I need to be quiet and listen so that I have the ability to share honestly, open-mindedly and willingly with others, and I need to learn to play well with others.

An excerpt from our symbol statement reads, ‘doing the right thing for the right reason.’ Now those are easy words to understand, but for me quite difficult if I’m not practicing spiritual principles on a daily basis. I need to always keep in the forefront of my recovery that no matter what comes out of a group conscience or a sub-committee vote, the bottom line is giving back what I’ve been freely given. I was taught how to be responsible and loving, how to accept people where they are and lift them up and give them what I’ve been given without expecting pay-back in any form. I was taught these things by you, my friends and my family in Narcotics Anonymous. So, I’ll keep trying, I’ll keep coming back and change will happen in my recovery.

Hugs,

Donna Mc.

November 04, 2014

# Celebration Acknowledgments, Subcommittees and Special Events

Date	Celebration	Home Group	Location
Dec.15	Brandon E.-2Yrs.	Mens Meeting	Edgehill
Dec.28	Liz C. -4 Yrs.	NOANDA	Market St. United Methodist
Jan.2	John F.- 2 Yrs.	Midday	Edgehill
Jan.7	Tom F.-8 yrs	Last Connection	Grace Community Church
Jan.22	Donna M.-29 yrs	The War is Over	Liberty Church-Berryville
Jan.24	Randy D.-19 yrs	Experience,Strength & Hope	Heart & Vascular Rm WMC
Feb.7	Annette D.-19 yrs	Experience Strength & Hope	Cafiteria @ WMC
Feb.26	Linda A.-23 Yrs.	The War is Over	Liberty Church- Berryville



**\*\*\*Some celebrations may have already passed, but we still want to acknowledge the celebrant!!**

Date/Time	Event/Activity	Host	Location
1st Sun/Mo - 10:30 am	Subcommittee Mtg	Special Events	Edgehill - Meeting Rm
1st Mon/Mo - 7:00 pm	Subcommittee Mtg	Hosp. & Inst.	303 S. Loudon, Winchester
1st Tues/Mo - 7:15 pm	Subcommittee Mtg	Outreach	Edgehill - Marilyn Rm
1st Wed /Mo - 6:15 pm	Subcommittee Mtg	Policy	Edgehill - Marilyn Rm
1st Sat/Mo - 6:00 pm	Subcommittee Mtg	Newsletter	WMC Cafeteria
3rd Tues/Mo - 8:15 pm	Subcommittee Mtg	Literature	Throx Market, Winchester
4th Sun/Mo - 3:00 pm	Subcommittee Mtg	Public Relations	Throx Market, Winchester

**Flyers for events can be found at meetings or visit [shevana.org](http://shevana.org)**

12-24-12/25 Hourly Meetings	Holiday Marathon	Special Events	John Mann Church
1/9-1/11 Annual AVCNA Convention	Regional Convention	Central Atlantic Region	Lynchburg, VA

*NOTE For All Submissions:*

*By submitting article(s), poem(s), and/or other written material pertaining to my personal experiences with or options about the NA fellowship or program, I understand that my material may be edited. I also give the Shevana Area Newsletter, Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship, their successors, assigns and those acting on thier authority permission to publish anything submitted. I further understand that every effort will be made to assure my anonymity, unless authorized. I possess full legal capacity to exercise the authorization and hereby release Shevana Area Newsletter, the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship, its service boards and committees, from any claim by myself, my successors and or my assisgns.*

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